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A Circle T-shirt makes it to Mt. Rushmore this issue

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A Note On Style

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SPECIAL SECTION

The New Country

Country music had lost grassroots charm, and rock and roll had sold out its rebellion. Folk and the blues were mired in relative obscurity. Then there arose a new movement, one which for lack of another name we dub the new country music, that tries, consciously or not, to rescue the intrinsic appeal of its predecessors.

In this *Circle* special section Rick Harmon gives us an overview, Ken Taylor interviews new-breed star Charlie Daniels, and we meet James Talley, a star on the horizon who granted *The Circle* his first interview since his second White House performance in December.

Progressive Country

From Glitter to Lynyrd

by Rick Harmon

There was a time when country music was about as popular as a good case of zits.

When I first started junior high school in the thriving metropolis of Montgomery, Ala., liking country music ranked only slightly behind wearing white socks as the number one way to completely annihilate peer status.

It was a simple fact in those simpler days that if you liked country music, you probably were a redneck—i.e. someone who asked a girl out on a date and would take her to watch the cattle auctions at Hooper Stockyard.

Luckily for a lot of people who have discovered that they like fiddles, cowboys, and mean-hearted women, the stigma attached to someone who likes country music has pretty well disappeared.

The major reason this prejudice dried up was a new form of music put under the catch-all category of "progressive country." What the term "progressive country" usually means is that most people don't know that the hell it is.

In the old days it was easy to spot country music. First of all there was always a man with a receding hair line, a Gary Glitter suit, pointy-toed boots and a voice that sounded like a mournful hog call. The female vocalist almost always looked like the hog.

Dressed in the latest Dale Evans garb, the bleached-blond would try to wail her way through her make-up, which invariably looked like she had put it on with a shovel.

If that weren't bad enough, the shows you saw country music on were always sponsored by products with tremendous youth appeal—Geritol, Ex-Lax and liver pills.

It was a shameful situation. Country music had once been known for a certain simple beauty. It was a music of rustic, isolated communities holding to tradition and it exuded a mixture of good times and small town dignity.

The music varied from old English folk tunes, and ballads like "Silver Dagger" and "The Banks of the Ohio" to "hillbilly" songs whose roots were distinctively American like "Turkey in the Straw" and "Country Rose."

Whatever the tune, it was almost invariably accompanied by buck dancing or square dancing. Even the city folks had to admit the "grass roots" country had a lot of class. But "grass roots" country had fallen on hard times, and "glitter country" was a whole different story.

In a day of English rock and youth rebellion it didn't take a young Einstein to see that this was "old folks" music and, as such, officially taboo.

Then country music began to get tricky. It began to get "progressive." Exactly who the first person was to get the idea of making country progressive could be argued, and has been argued for a long, long time, but whoever it was, the guy was sneaky. Country music started disguising itself, and giving us seventh-graders fits.

Gone were the peroxide blondes and their sequin-studded gowns. They were replaced by singers that looked and dressed like regular people—young regular people. I told you it was sneaky.

Making matters more confusing, unlike the old glitter country that pushed patriotism and apple pie along with the laxatives and liver pills, the new country consisted of musicians that were symbols of the youth revolution.

Bob Dylan helped give country a progressive push and convinced many young people to give it a listen when he joined with people like Johnny Cash, Charlie McCoy and Charlie Daniels to record country albums like *John*

Wesley Hardin and Nashville Skyline.

Bands like the Grateful Dead and Poco formed and began to play their own brands of country mixed with modern pop. Finally one of the major turning points came with the Florida evolution of a band called the Allman Brothers.

As time went on the boundaries between country music and just about every other kind of music began to collapse. Country was merged with jazz, blues, folk and pop until forms of music were created that weren't really like the old country but weren't really anything else either. For want of a better name someone dubbed the music "progressive country."

Gradually this "progressive country" started winning a lot of us in junior high away from Bobby Sherman and the Jackson Five and replaced them with bands like the New Riders of the Purple Sage and The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band.

It even became stylish to like "hard core" country. Suddenly along with the new progressive artists like Kris Kristofferson, Jerry Garcia, and Waylon Jennings, we started turning to the old masters like Bob Willis and the Texas Playboys, Vassar Clements and Earl Scruggs.

"Progressive country" has accomplished a lot. So smoothly has it blended country in with blues and pop, that it has become difficult to identify country at all.

Who can really tell whether singers like Linda Ronstadt and bands like Lynyrd Skynyrd are country, pop, or rock? But then, who really cares? The music remains the same, whatever it's called.





James Talley:

Heartfelt Country Blues

by Mark C. Winne

*"I've looked for the changes for such a long time,
But the same old problems, they just won't die.
Well, I know it's just life and ain't nothin' new
But if it weren't for the blues, I'd be crazy too."*

James Talley sings that. Could be, in a metaphoric sort of way, he really means it. After all, he says personal experience is his inspiration, and apparently some of that experience left him, if not crazy, at least frustrated.

Before he was being typically-hailed as the next Woody Guthrie, before he'd attracted the attention of *Newsweek*, *Rolling Stone*, *National Observer*, *People*, *Cosmopolitan* and other well-known journals, Talley was, among other things, a welfare caseworker, a rat controller and a public health employee. There, he gained memories of vermin-infested hovels in Nashville slums, memories that blended with recollections of mud-house barrios in the New Mexico he was reared in.

"I think I had this sort of strange curse," he says, "I think I get it from my father—a sense of looking at man's inhumanity to man and lack of sensitivity."

Though it had its moments, the public health work didn't seem to sate Talley's discontent. Says he of the rat control job: "As it turned out, I beat my head against the wall for three years." He blames his ineffectuality on the restrictions placed on welfare workers by government regulations. "If you want anything to turn you away from being a socialist," he says caustically, "just work for the government for a while and see what the bureaucracy is like."

Talley got into the carpentry business, and he helped build a recording studio in return for its free use. He cut a record, hawked it himself to disc-jockeys and was soon picked up by the Capitol record label. Four albums, done with some "artistic freedom and control," gave Talley a vent for his frustrations, a medium for his (for lack of a better word) message.

"I don't feel like it's a 'message' or anything, it just happens that's the way I see things, and I can't hardly get away from it," says the tall, bearded, dark-bushy-haired Talley, appropriate-

ly described by one writer as looking the angry young man that he is.

"I don't go out and seek and say 'Gee, how can I write a social commentary?' I'm not a journalist, I just can't help it."

He's not far removed from a journalist, though. His music is a reflection of the lives, pains and pleasures of a mostly-rural, lower-class people. His voice, aside from occasional crowd-pleasing foot-stompers, is mellifluously, provocatively pleasing, and the melodies are catchy. But the value in Talley's songs—and Talley gives the impression that he agrees—lies in his lyrics, which are as simply eloquent, and often much less self-indulgent, than other contemporary "folk-poets." He sings titles like "Poets of the West Virginia Mines," "Tryin' Like the Devil," "Are They Gonna Make Us Outlaws Again," and "Migrant Jesse Sawyer."

Urban Tennessee slums inspired "Daddy Just Calls It the Blues":

*There's pushers in the alley
And junkies on the street
Broken dreams and Welfare beans,
And all the plumbin' leaks;
And mama's leanin' hard on Jesus,
He's all she's got to make it through
Daddy just called it the blues.*

The comparisons with Guthrie are not unfounded. "He was a tremendous influence on me," says Talley of the itinerant folk singer. "He was one of the most important writers the country's ever had. Like a Carl Sandburg, a Robert Frost, a Walt Whitman. When you can have a song that can endure in the minds of people like 'This Land Is Your Land,' after your lifetime, that almost becomes an unofficial national anthem, you know you've said something significant."

Guthrie is not Talley's only depression-era hero. The list includes Sandburg, John Steinbeck, James Agee and Farm Security photographers. Coupled with Talley's

graduate art studies at UCLA with an area of emphasis in 1930's American art, an interesting preoccupation with those times emerges.

Talley says the depression was eloquently and artistically documented. But beyond that, "For thousands of people, the depression is not over. The soup lines, the bread lines and all that, it's the same as taking food stamps and commodities and things that the average person doesn't even realize exist."

The frustration, despite the profound lyrics, the phenomenal press coverage and the next so-and-so comparisons, didn't end with his entrance into big-time entertainment.

"The only thing I regret, the only thing that frustrates me is that I got four albums out and people are still saying 'James Who?'"

Talley's notoriety is paradoxical. From his first album, he had gained favor with music critics. But the big break, a public relations dream, came when Jimmy Carter told Barbara Walters that he and Rosalynn liked to spend evenings at home listening to James Talley records. Then Talley played at the inaugural ball, where he was the only entertainer Carter approached backstage. That combination of critical acclaim and public exposure seems at first unbeatable, but Talley's hardly a household name.

He doesn't like to see the disparity between acclaim and popularity in print "because it's not my fault." Many critics "don't know jackshit" about the ins and outs of record producing.

For all the profundity of his work, he says, "I'd have felt a lot better if I'd been able to share it with a lot more people, if the record company would have gone out and done the promotion that's really necessary. Once I finish the album it's taken out of my hands and it's just like merchandising a bar of soap."

"You either get the dollars in advertising and merchandising spent on

you, or on Steve Miller, or Bob Seger or the Beatles or somebody else gets it."

Talley does little to hide his animosity towards Capitol. "I don't think they even understood what I was doing," he says. Indications are that his next album will be on another label.

"They constantly kept a lot of pressure on me to make a lot of 'progress.'" Perhaps the Capitol people discerned that less "social relevance" and more commercial polish would sell more records.

But the commercial idea had occurred to Talley already, before Capitol had probably heard even his name, let alone his music. "I tried. When I first came to Nashville I was confronted with this thing they call commercialism," he recalls. "I'd always looked at songwriting as a means of personal expression.

"I didn't know what the charts were.

"I literally tried to get into that (commercial) frame of mind, because I knew that I had something to say and I figured, well, I gotta get a toehold somewhere. But I couldn't look at the world that way."

But his music wasn't lacking in popular appeal, he would later conclude. It just isn't getting the right exposure. Radio airplay is commonly recognized as the key to selling records, and says Talley of his songs, "They're not going to get on the radio if the record company doesn't work 'em."

"I promise you," he pointedly declared, "if I could do an album this spring and have one song that got heavy rotation, major airplay in every city in the country, I could come down

here [Atlanta] this summer and play the Fox."

The key to getting performance out of a record company seems to be "a heavy financial commitment" so record companies have incentive to recover their investment.

That Capitol would be as insensitive as Talley depicts them would indicate, at least to an amateur observer, that they must not be particularly shrewd either. Talley has generated a remarkable amount of publicity, presumably without much Capitol assistance. He is unusually cooperative in facilitating interviews, to an extent that goes beyond the necessity of the you-scratch-my-back rationale. It's just another way to share his music, he says. Aside from the sundry national magazines he's attracted, he's a favorite subject of major local publications like *The Washington Post* and the New York hip-community's *The Village Voice*.

Though Talley reeks of populism, and though the Talleys are so folksy with the Carters that the president once called Talley's mother to reassure her that her son hadn't worn jeans to the White House in his second appearance there, Talley professes almost as much disdain for the political intricacies of government as he does for the politics of the record industry.

"I don't keep up with politics. I'm not really a political person. My wife reads *Time* magazine every week, I read it sometimes. She reads the newspaper every week, I read it occasionally. All I do is look at the overview. I don't have to read the newspaper to drive down the

street and see somebody living in a shack. I don't have to read the newspaper to see some old person, sitting on a bench waiting for a bus, that can't hardly make it...it's just a matter of walking down the street with your eyes open."

Talley likes to quote Wright Morris' book *The Inhabitants*: "They became what they beheld." Likewise, what Talley's beheld has been manifested in his music.

"All art is, really, is an extension of life...a reflection of our culture, ourselves," he says. Entertaining, he asserts, like any art form means moving people.

"That's your function, to move people. Somehow to move 'em off dead center whether it's to make them mad, to make them outraged, to make them happy or to make them get up and dance."

Talley sings mainly about rural people, and musically his product is pointedly unsophisticated. Living in Nashville, and apparently through Capitol's efforts, he has been dubbed a country singer. It seems inappropriate to put the same label on Talley as on Porter Wagner, Buck Owens, and Dolly Parton. In an interview, at least, he won't label his music.

*Cigarettes and whisky, Lord
And John the Conqueror,
Shotgun shacks and railroad tracks,
Big city women too;
I've been from downtown Chicago
Lord, all the way to Baton Rouge—*

*And my daddy, Lord, my daddy...
He just called it the blues.*



Photo by Wanda Kenton

Charlie Daniels

Long-haired Country Boy

by Ken Taylor

After two hot-pickin', foot-stompin', hell-raisin' groups performed before wild, screaming teenagers in the Dothan Civic Center, the lights went low and the piped-in top 40 music used as a filler was silenced for the third time. Several western-clad musicians and a bearded mountain sporting a wide-brimmed cowboy hat were ushered to their special places on stage. The musicians were welcomed warmly as the Charlie Daniels Band. The bearded man was none other than Charlie Daniels.

Originally from a farm in Wilmington, North Carolina, the son of a man in the timber business, Daniels plucked his first musical notes on a mandolin.

"The mandolin and the fiddle have the same fingerings, the same frets," said Daniels, "I first learned to play the mandolin, then switched to the fiddle.

"There was all kinds of folks gettin' a band together and you could find any kind of instrument you wanted—banjo pickers, guitar players, bass players—but you couldn't find a fiddle player. So I just decided to do it myself."

Following a time in the timber business, Daniels' first "doing it" days as an amateur musician were spent with a blue grass band playing square dances and performing on a local radio show. Not much later, Daniels got his first taste of professional music—guzzling beers and rubbing elbows with the local boys, playing in beer joints what he called a mixture of country and rock, with a band named the Jaguars. It was during a time when Elvis Presley, who Daniels thinks was the first to mix country and rock together, was beginning to rise tremendously in popularity.

"You know everybody talks about country rock and progressive country and all that stuff, and actually, when

you get down to it, the first man that I ever heard put country and rock together was Elvis Presley," said Daniels. "But he was kinda claimed by the pop-music world, which at the time was real shy about having anything with a country label on it...nobody would call him country, but he was."

Since his days of huffing around on the farm and strumming the mandolin on the side, Daniels has put in 20 years of playing professional music and travelled his millionth mile on the road. He has been widely accepted all over the United States, and is received as well or better in the North than in the South.



"Besides a concert we did this past New Year's Eve in Atlanta, our largest crowds have been in the North," said Daniels.

Other than an obvious preference for playing in the grits and butter-bean states where he was raised (and seemingly fed well), Daniels said his

favorite place to play is "anybody's stage with a bunch of people in front of it."

Daniels says that his music doesn't fit into a particular class in the diverse environment of musical species, but it should not be labeled or classified, just listened to.

"I refuse to be type cast," said Daniels. "You listen to any album we got out and there's no way you can stick it in a definite pigeon hole, other than saying it's the same band...as far as someone being able to predict what we're going to do, they can't do it—cause I can't do it. There's no telling what direction we're going to go in."

"We don't purposely cut an album for it to be country or rock or whatever. We cut 19 songs and try to pick the best 10 out of the 19. Regardless of what the New York fellas say what 'genre' it falls into, we cut music for the sake of music."

Daniels sees few differences with country greats of other eras, like a Porter Wagner or a Hank Williams, only the use of language.

"The vernacular's a little different—a little looser. If I get ready to say 'damn something' or 'to hell with something,' I say it," asserted Daniels. "I don't think Hank Williams was able to do that—nobody would have played his records, I'm not bound by supposedly the same moral standards that they were."

There are many theories about the alleged new country-rock sound. Musically, the last few decades were easily distinguished from each other. A person could spoon out of the "big soup" whatever flavor he had a taste for. But today, all the spices once conveniently boxed and labeled as jazz, rock, rhythm and blues, and country have all over-turned, leaving a sound difficult to categorize.

Several suggest the country-rock transition took place when "Messiah of Rock" Bob Dylan moved towards country music with his album *Nashville*

Skyline in 1967 (on which Daniels performed as a sessions man).

"There's been kind of a stigma to country or hillbilly music or whatever you want to call it," said Daniels. "It has always been seemed to be thought by a lot of people, that people that like country were like dumb hillbillies, and they would never be attached to that—they would never say, 'I like country music.'"

"And then of course Dylan... Well I don't really consider what Dylan did was country music myself. It was just Dylan, 'the country musician'."

Daniels said sometimes people don't use their capacity to think for themselves, and when Dylan decided to move in that direction, they decided it was safe to say they listened to country music.

The military was the wind that spread the seed of country music around to other parts of the country to grow, theorized Daniels, where people had never been exposed to that kind of music before.

"The boys from the South and the boys from the North would get together in the Navy, Army, the Air Force and what have you—and these guys would say, 'Hey, I like that music... It's damn good,' and they'd go home, buy the records and the first thing you know—well there's a country record store in New York City now."

Always, there are changing fads, new gimmicks, high-flying, short-living success stories that appear and re-appear in the multi-faceted music industry. Disco music is a prime and profitable example. The latest craziness from England is punk rock.

Daniels opined that some of the antics displayed by faddists such as punk rockers are okay if that's what those people want to do.

"You won't see us put safety pins through our noses or anything like that, but that's the way we choose not to be. If someone chooses to be that way, that's their right. If they get people off doing it—great!" said Daniels. "That's what music is for—to stir some kind of emotion in people, hopefully most of the time to make people happy. It's entertainment."

Daniels supplied a definition of a classic song and applied it to the man he admires as the father of modern day country music.

"A classic is music that has survived through the generations and is still living," said Daniels. "It means just as much now as it did when it was new, and I see Hank Williams' music as being that way."

"If there was or is ever a greater man than Hank Williams, well I just hope I'm around to meet him."

The first act to play the evening

Charlie Daniels breezed into town with his midnight wind tour was a man named Lenny LeBlanc, the touring vocalist from the recording group LeBlanc and Carr, of Muscle Shoals. Their album, *Midnight Light*, is doing successfully on the charts with a top 40 single out called "Falling".

Pete Carr, the sessions man who plays guitar on the album, has played on albums of several recording artists such as Bob Seger, Rod Stewart, Cat Stevens and Paul Simon, as well as cutting his own solo instrumental albums. Together the band is trying to express a "kinda California-type sound, like the Eagles do, from the South," as LeBlanc described it.

"The South is full of 'Southern boogie bands,' all playing it to the hilt," said LeBlanc, "so we want to show that there are other things."

The second act, belting out lightning licks with a country beat, was one of the bands LeBlanc was talking about, the Winter Brothers Band. Dennis and Donny Winter, the guitar players and founders of the group, received a lot of influence from country great Marty Robbins, since their father played for his band.

"We felt going in this direction, like the Allman Brothers, Marshall Tucker, CDB and Wet Willie, bands like that, is the most positive way to get our message across," said Donny Winter.

Getting their message across was

very evident in their performance, which left fans hooting and howling in amazed delight.

The final act was what everybody had been waiting for, and was particularly the reason for the number of cowboy hats displayed by loyal followers.

CDB, setting fire to steel strings and rosined bows, performed their artistry in front of a screen depicting the tree-clothed Smoky Mountains of Tennessee, including a rising sun or smiling moon—whatever the occasion of the song called for.

The band spread its smorgasboard of music out for the crowd's enjoyment, going from a funky rhythm and blues-type sound with "Trudy" to light-humor story-telling in "Uneasy Rider," finally climaxing with their fourth encore, "Orange Blossom Special" with the aid of Ben Smathers and the Grand Old Opry's Stoney Mountain Cloggers, kicking heels up in circles, pivoting on knees.

It was an evening showing Charlie Daniels doing what Charlie Daniels says he does: Playing what he wants to play and living the life he wants to live.

*I ain't asking nobody for nothing,
If I can't get it on my own.
You don't like the way I'm living,
You just leave this long-haired
country boy alone.*



Alabama's Creek Indians: Has the Trail of Tears Ended?

by Jackie Romine and Ruth Ann Dunn



Stretched out over the flat Coastal plains, the houses look like any others in Escambia County. Neighbors are separated by several city blocks. Some homes are brightly painted, but many show signs of the low socio-economic status of their owners. Several families have small vegetable gardens but a substantial amount of land is taken up by large landowners and corporations. If it weren't for the sign hailing Poarch as the "Creek Nation East of the Mississippi," most persons wouldn't notice anything different about Poarch.

More than 130 years have passed since the great dislocation of the Indians of the Southeast. Often roped together for the long walk westward down the "trail of tears," many Cherokees, Alabamas, Choctaws, Creeks, and other Indians died as they were herded westward from their Alabama homes. Families were torn apart as the weak tribe members were left on the roadside to die as the group was forced to Oklahoma.

The modern Creeks, left in Alabama by chance or by the grace of President Andrew Jackson, walk a contemporary trail of tears, coping with discrimination, denial of Constitutional rights and the resulting lack of education and job opportunities.

Most Alabama Indians live on land in South Alabama made available through a landgrant from Jackson to Lynn McGhee, a Creek who served as a guide for Jackson during the War of 1812. Many Creeks who live in Poarch (Poarch-Switch), located eight miles northwest of Atmore in Escambia County, descended from the original McGhee family. The last three men to serve as chief of the nation were McGhees—the late Calvin W. McGhee, Houston McGhee, who resigned as chief in October, and Willis Kent McGhee, Jr., the present chief.

The 1970 census shows 2,443 American Indians in the entire state of Alabama, with 541 in Escambia County, and 300 in the Poarch community. Jennie Lee Dees, executive director of the Creek Tribal Council, says "That's terribly wrong. Back in 1970, the American Indians were very hesitant to be openly identified as American Indians because of various reasons—social stigma—things like that." She estimates that more than 3,000 Creeks live in Poarch or surrounding areas. The 1980 census should show more realistic statistics for the American Indian population, because, she believes:

employment programs for the Creeks. She points out that before 1952 no Escambia County Indians had completed high school—there was nowhere for them to go. Indian children were not permitted to ride the buses to public schools, so the Indians built their own schools, first through the sixth grades, and paid their own teachers. In 1920 Escambia County began to pay teacher's salaries. In 1940 the children were bused to a three-teacher school supported by the Episcopal Church.

In 1950 Indian students went to public Escambia County schools for the first time, and that came about as the result of a federal suit by Hugh Rozelle (currently Escambia County district judge), on behalf of the Indians against the Escambia County Board of Education, the superintendent of schools, and even the school bus driver. He and a Bay Minette lawyer won the case in the federal court in Mobile.

"It wasn't long before the Indians came back to my office," Judge Rozelle recalls, "and told me 'They're building a brick school house out there. We don't want another school house. They're still trying to keep us out of the white schools.'"

Before 1952 no Escambia County Indian had completed high school—there was nowhere for them to go.

"The American Indian is becoming aware of his heritage. They are becoming proud of their heritage and their traditions and the part they played in each."

As a part of her job, Ms. Dees helps coordinate Community Employment Training Act (CETA) educational and

The court and the county compromised, sending Indian children to predominantly-white McCulla Junior High and Atmore High Schools after they had completed sixth grade at the Indian Consolidated School the county built in Poarch.

Education is of increasing impor-

tance to the Creeks. Adult Basic Education is offered to Indians in day and evening classes. Through education, the Creeks hope to improve the socioeconomic levels of Indian groups and individuals. Keeping the Indian youth in school is another priority but the drop-out rate is high for Indian high school students.

"It's very difficult for a parent who's illiterate to get over to the children the importance of education," Ms. Dees explained.

She says more Indians are educated today than ever before. "It's through these people who have knocked on the bureaucratic doors, that the white population is reminded of what's going on with the Indian today."

Following the school case, employment opportunities have expanded somewhat for the Poarch Creeks. They began working in local factories where they had been barred, ostensibly because of lack of education. Still in 1974 only two percent of the Poarch Creeks were professionally employed or white collar workers. Five percent were blue-collar workers. The remaining 93 percent were either unemployed or working as unskilled laborers.

In 1973, in most cases with at least two adults working, the median family income in Poarch reached \$4,668. Of course, welfare and foodstamps are available to the Indians after applying and qualifying through government agencies. Many Indians have difficulty completing the forms for such aid, Ms. Dees said, especially the older, less-educated Indians.

Soon after the school case Rozelle began representing the Creeks in a second federal suit he calls "the money case," which lasted 16 years. As a result in 1966 Alabama Indians and their Oklahoma kinsmen were awarded \$4,003,000 by the Indian Claims Commission, a five-judge panel created to hear land claims from groups of identifiable Indians. When the dividing was over, each Creek Indian received \$112. But the importance of the case wasn't the money but the recognition.

The money compensated the Indians for 29 million acres which was once the Creek Nation before being taken by then-General Jackson in 1814 as retribution for the Creek-Indian War. The Creek Nation had encompassed most of what is now Alabama (south of the Tennessee River), Georgia, and parts of Mississippi and Florida.

All persons able to trace their Creek ancestry back to 1814 received a share of the money. Prior to the settlement the Indian Claims Commission considered the Oklahoma Creeks the only existing Creek nation, but the 1966 decision established the Alabama

group as the Creek Nation East of the Mississippi.

To the Alabama Indians the importance of the decision was, in Ms. Dees words, "that they recognized that we were here and that we are here."

"Monetarily, yes, it was a small amount except from the standpoint that finally they admitted that there had been a wrong done and that was the first admission."

One Poarch Indian never cashed his check. He framed it and hung it on the wall.

Despite the two successful suits and the work of the late chief Calvin McGhee, whom Dees described as "totally self-sacrificing," the Poarch Creeks still face hardships. Prejudice lingers.

"Some people never change," said John Kemp, CETA project director. "Some of the local people's attitudes have changed considerably, but there's still a lot to be done in that area. Maybe an Indian won't get a job, even though he's qualified."

Indian workers say they are often forced to commute outside Escambia County to Baldwin and Mobile Counties, and many must go outside the state as far away as Pensacola, Fla., to obtain adequate employment. For instance, the present chief, Willis Kent McGhee, Jr., works primarily in Birmingham with a utilities company. Some job discrimination has been eased by equal employment laws, particularly with large corporations.

Such discrimination has meant that

many local people never admitted their Indian blood. Kemp said his wife's father would never admit to his Creek blood. He would say, "No, we're German." His hesitance, Kemp said, came from the discrimination early in the century which was so strong that Indians could only get haircuts in shops

Indians could only get haircuts in shops on 'a certain little street in town.'

on "a certain little street in town."

Bias can be manifested in subtle ways. American Indians have not been listed as such on their birth certificates, a fact Ms. Dees complains about. A nurse classified her grandchild "Caucasian," while Ms. Dees insisted that an American Indian classification should at least be listed under "other."

Unlike other minorities such as the American Negro who have moved swiftly toward equal rights, the Indian has been hampered by isolation, both physical and cultural.

"While our children had nowhere to go, the Negroes were enjoying the luxury of public schools. They may have been segregated public schools, but they did have schools," Ms. Dees said.

Even though the Poarch community will have more high school graduates this year than ever in the past, "We have young people who don't really care to achieve because of the loss of a sense of identity," Kemp said. "They



District Judge Hugh Rozelle, courtroom champion of Alabama Indian rights.

Photos by Ruth Ann Dunn



The late Chief Calvin McGhee, 'at home with presidents.'

are suspended between two cultures—the Indian and the white. It's hard for them to go to a public school.

"It's like an island here, isolated, and it's been kept that way for so long it's difficult to work with some of these problems."

The low economic status of so many Indian families hinders advancement of the young people. "Some parents feel it's more important to put young people to work and bring food and money in, than it is to get an education," said Kemp.

He observes the national consciousness changing towards the Indian, due in part to the Wounded Knee incident of the early 1970's. Americans were made aware of the Indian's plight when the radical American Indian Movement (AIM) members took over the reservation at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, and exchanged fire with

FBI agents.

Although he disagreed with AIM's method, Kemp thought the incident "at least shook people up to what was going on and the way the Indians were being held back. I think that got to everyone's conscience."

As a result, he said more Indians went to Washington, demanding their rights, "They're learning to speak up now."

"They sat down long enough," agreed Ms. Dees, "and they figured it was about time to get up." She added that the percentage of registered voters is above average in the Poarch community. She also said, however, the idea of an Indian running for and being elected to a county government position is a "dream."

Transportation is a major problem and heightens the Indians' isolation dilemma. The Tribal Council owns one

mini-bus for the entire community, which includes Poarch, Hog Fork and Headapeada.

Cultural awareness is, to Indian leaders, a pressing area in Indian education. Traditions are dying out. The Creek dialect of the Muscogee language is not spoken by the Alabama Creeks, although steps were taken in this direction in a 1977 Summer Youth Program, when Dr. Ralph W.E. Hunt, Jr., associate professor of Humanities at Pensacola Junior College, introduced a series of projects for the study and teaching of the native language.

Some traditions may be on their way back, though. The Headapeada Dance Team, directed by J.W. "Billy" Smith, performs at the Creeks' annual Thanksgiving Pow Wow. Smith went to Oklahoma to study Creek dances, though few reach back to the days of the undivided Creek nation.

The Thanksgiving Pow Wow tradition likewise began only eight years ago with tomahawk throwing demonstrations, Indian dancing, a Princess contest and bow and arrow turkey shoot. The day for Creeks is a return to "home base," and the 18-member Tribal Council is elected that day with the president of the council serving as chief.

In considering cultural awareness in the community and the schools, Ms. Dees said one must think in terms of Indian disabilities, experienced at the hands of dominant society, such as prejudices, discrimination and segregation. Past efforts to educate Indians to meet white norms and the assimilation process placed upon the Indian by the federal government, have been a complete failure, according to Indian standards.

But at the same time the deculturation of the Indian, assert leaders, has resulted in the loss of identity, pride and the willingness to achieve. The Tribal Council believes a clear sense of group identity is necessary before any meaningful interaction takes place between the Indian and the rest of society.

Last summer Indian children of the Poarch community learned about their cultural heritage from Debbie Hicks, a student of Indian culture and traditional heritage at the University of Alabama. Reports say the children's enthusiasm has carried over into the parent and adult groups.

Encouraging that enthusiasm is the new Calvin W. McGhee Memorial Cultural Center, a Creek Indian Cultural center, a combination museum and library. Plans are still long-range since money must go into a general fund for all Creek Nation projects. The center honors McGhee, who



spear-headed the school and money cases, earning immense respect from the Indians and from some of the white community as well.

Judge Rozelle speaks fondly of

McGhee and the dozens of trips they made together to Washington, "by airship, train and automobile. He never did go to college. Calvin McGhee, he probably didn't complete sixth grade,

but he was educated."

"Now some of the words he used, I've never heard of. You couldn't find them in a dictionary, but he sure got his point across."

McGhee was at home with Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, "He had pictures made with each president. He was always having his picture made with some governor, folks like that."

Before the federally-ordered removal of the Indians from Alabama in the 1800's the Creeks were a strong nation, formed from a nucleus of the Muscogee Indian. Alabama's Creeks, the only recognized community-based Indian group in Alabama, still show pride in the Great Seal of the Muscogee Nation, though they were stripped of their strength many years ago.

Dees called the 1966 claims case a "first admission" of wrong done the Creek nation. After a century and a half she felt it was long overdue. She couldn't say when the American Indian will be able to stand equally alongside other minorities and the white society, but if equality ever comes to these Native Americans it will be at the end of a long, hard road.



I don't remember nothin' 'bout the town I was born in
I was too young at the time
an' too young for memories when we left
but sometimes at night
if I've been spendin' the evenin' with tequila
I can imagine the town
tucked down so far south that it kisses the Mexican Border
an' if I close my eyes
I can see dust an' newspapers blowin' up the streets
an' the animals hidin' in the shade of trees
an' the fat women
with rivers of sweat runnin' down their brown skin
an' little children circlin' their feet like hornets round a nest
an' I can smell the heat, the dry air
an' the spices and flavors from the dinin' hall 'cross the street
where drunken workers arm-wrestle for another beer
an' the guitarist plays tall-tales that go unnoticed by the crowd
an' I can hear the silk sound of lizards climbin' on the window
an' snakes slidin' through the grass
an' the sound of the dry earth crackin' in the heat
an' mosquitos slippin' through the screen door's seams
all like silk
an' I can feel the pleasure of the breeze upon my naked back
sometimes at night

—Keith Fendrick



Photo by Gordon Bugg

The Spoils of War and Wife

FICTION by Mala Paulk

When Cecil Perkins died, he left a half-acre of uncut sugar cane, a half-dozen scrawny chickens, and a half-wit brother named Dexter. The nature of Dexter's malady resulted not from a prenatal injury but from the organized arguments of kings, presidents and prime ministers men call war. Dexter, through dependability, submission, and pure determination, had been promoted all the way to second lieutenant before being shipped to a war-ravaged France in a haze of confetti and weepy women. He changed somewhere between his embarkation to the Avignon and his return to Killcare County a scant two months later. The Army doctors had labeled the new, unpredictable Dexter Perkins a shell shock victim, which in the Killcare caste system placed him one rung above Parnell "Looney" Judkins who was kicked in the head when he was seven by an aggravated mule.

The whole town looked upon the care of Dexter as a patriotic duty, like eating barbecue on the Fourth or standing when "Dixie" was played at a public meeting. Dexter liked frequenting the Faith, Hope, and Charity Thrift Store where he purchased his seasonal wardrobes of snagged plaid pants and short-sleeved cotton shirts with invariably limp collars. Once, from an undisclosed benevolent source, the store received a hideous pair of purple double-knit pants, about the color of wisteria blossoms. These were snatched up in a frenzy of excited disbelief by a Dexter Perkins certain he had found sartorial perfection. The pants, the limp shirt, along with a red felt University of Alabama cowboy hat presented to him by a football fan with the zeal of an evangelist, made up the uniform of Dexter Perkins. This made him eye-catching if not eye-appealing, a Killcare landmark like the Confederate statue in the center of town. When he sat on the pine bench in front of Haygood's Pic-n-Pay and whined old war tunes like "Oui Oui, Marie," he looked like a misplaced vaudeville veteran. He almost made the passerby want to stop and throw a quarter to see if dancing was included in his act. Not that Dexter needed the quarter, or to shop at a thrift store for that matter, the U.S government had seen to that. A nickel here, a dime there. Odd jobs were just a way of entertainment to him when the pine bench got too hard or he was tired of singing old war songs.

While Dexter Perkins never boycotted milk or gas prices or argued traffic tickets or took sides when church congregations split, he did pose one community problem: he reacted violently to loud noises. The occasions were usually unpredictable, unheralded—cars backfiring, the county laying new gravel roads. These were accompanied by Dexter's swinging arms, slinging head, and thundering obscenities. The same behavior almost always ensued when any unassuming soul patted him politely, affectionately upon the back.

The Baptist Women's Benevolence Committee, an off-shoot of the Women's Missionary Union, were noted county-wide for their interventions into altruistic-flavored affairs. They met on Tuesday afternoons. When Mary Ruth Ware became chairman (or chairwoman as some of the more liberated liked it) of the socially-influential group, the election became a topic to be analyzed, to be discussed, to be calculated. The townspeople sat back to watch which crusades the busty, overbearing, and emotional Mrs. Ware would launch.



Illustration by Jesse Evans

The first committee meeting of the church calendar year was held in the Ware's boxy little living room over congealed salad and fruit cake cookies.

After announcements about an alumni football game at the high school and a seasonal cantata at the Methodist Church, the real business-at-hand was launched.

"Ladies, I'd like to entertain a motion to do somethin' about Dexter Perkins," began Mary Ruth Ware in her commanding nasal tone. "The obscenities he keeps utterin' when somethin' startles him are disgustin'. I don't care if he is feeble-minded."

She was stuffed into a jersey dress splashed with huge camellias and wore perfume that smelled like orange peels.

With the subject initiated, the circle of ladies, their hair frosted and sprayed and tightly curled, narrowed their eyes and attempted to recollect instances of Dexter's instability. They slipped their pumps on and off, grinding the spindly spikes that were their shoe heels deeper and deeper into the Wares' living room carpet. Some fondled and rotated their rings, some examined fingernails for overgrown cuticles and chipped nail polish, still others massaged throbbing earlobes bruised in the clutches of clip-on earrings, all awaiting opportunities to contribute to the discussion.

"Now I remember once giving him a nickel to carry a hoe down the street to the Crawfords, and 'fore he got out of my driveway good, a horn blew at the end of the block and he commenced to takin' the Lord's name in vain and swinging that thing around!" related a breathless Mildred Parker. "And when I stop and think my Mary Kaye was only around the corner playing...well, well...I could just shudder!"

The whole group shuddered with Mildred Parker and nodded sympathetically and ate more congealed salad.

"Oh once," shouted Leila Carmichael, almost dropping a fork full of salad into her lap in the excitement. "I ran into him in front of Pic-n-Pay and he said, 'evenin', Miss Carmichael,' real dirty-like. Lord knows what the G.I. was thinking. I don't care for the way he's been eyein' me at all."

Leila Carmichael was sixty-three years old, unmarried, and weighed 187 pounds. She looked like a gigantic lump of floured dough waiting to be kneaded.

Mary Ruth Ware snatched the lead of the conversation again bearing an expression of unsuppressible joy at the ready acceptance of her idea.

"Well, it sounds then like you'll agree with me that the only logical place for Dexter Perkins is in the state mental hospital down in Mount Vernon. That way, he'll be with his own kind." She

paused briefly and fluttered her stubby eyelashes as if to debate whether or not her last statement bore an element of snobbery. She finished the proposal in a softer, more subdued tone, giving the project a more charitable taste.

"The U.S. government has got money set up for folks like Dexter. Besides, with his brother Cecil gone, there's nobody for him to answer to, and in the end, this'll help Dexter more than it will us."

The women put down their plates and coffee cups and lightly applauded in agreement.

Judge Barker, no paragon of legal ethics in the first place, would be easily persuaded by the committee, of which Mrs. Barker was a charter member, to make the necessary legal preparations.

"My husband, Maurice, will be more than happy to accompany Dexter to Mount Vernon," volunteered Mary Ruth.

When he slipped soundlessly through the front door of his home after work that evening, Maurice Ware was carrying an afternoon paper under his arm and balancing a pen behind his left ear. He had almost successfully parked his bottom on the living room sofa when Mary Ruth's voice, as tender as an Army drill sergeant, came thundering through the doorway.

"Maurice, tomorrow is your day off and you are takin' Dexter Perkins on the bus to Mount Vernon. I considered lettin' you drive, but he's liable to get upset and tug at your arms and we just don't have that much insurance on either you or the car. You leave at 7:45," she ordered, waving a pair of stiff red tickets in his face. "And take that pen out from behind your ear, it goes in your shirt pocket...unless you've lost the cap to your pen, Maurice? You know how I hate to rub ink out of your shirt pockets...I haveta' scrub and soak, soak and scrub..." Her voice trailed off as she returned to the kitchen to finish beating the steak she was frying for supper.

Maurice bit the skin on his upper lip, crossed his legs, and picked up a section of *The Journal* to inspect. He was a short man, who in times of contentment had tendency to be pudgy, with skin so transparently pale he looked as though the only light rays his skin had received in the past six years were from the fluorescent bulbs in his accounting office.

"Dear God, why did I ever marry her?" breathed Maurice behind the classified ads page.

He must have pondered that question twenty-five times a week. Maurice tried to remember Mary Ruth during their unfairy tale-like courtship and all he could remember was an offensive voice

demanding banana splits at the downtown drugstore. He thought her demands were kind of cute then; they somewhat reminded him of his mother requiring piano practice one hour each afternoon or galoshes when the sky was overcast. On the second day of their honeymoon, he decided that Mary Ruth wasn't quite so cute anymore, an opinion which he had held thus far in their marriage. Eighteen years of Mary Ruth's constant chatter initiated a hyperactive energy that vested itself in nervous ticks such as blinking his right eye, raising and lowering his left shoulder, and sniffing and snorting as if he had a severe case of hay fever.

The next morning, between instructions on bus etiquette and how to detect a potential pilferer, Mary Ruth Ware handed her husband a paper sack containing tuna-fish sandwiches, olives, and chocolate cupcakes, and then she neatly pinned the bus tickets to the pocket of his starched shirt. On the drive to the bus terminal, Maurice calculated the amount of time it would take to reach Mount Vernon and then return homeward. It would take four hours and fifteen minutes, including stops, to arrive at the hospital, and then another four hours and fifteen minutes back to Killcare—that was eight and one half hours of liberty from Mary Ruth! Maurice turned up the volume of the radio and sang along loudly, something about falling in love with a girl on an elevator; he didn't know the words at all and didn't really care.

Dexter Perkins was already standing in the bus depot with two ladies from the committee when Maurice arrived. He wore his University of Alabama hat and purple pants—the feather on the brim of the hat had been broken in half. Leaning there against the white metal pole, holding his wardrobe in a Piggly Wiggly sack, he had the look of one intoxicated with the prospects of exciting, unknown adventure.

Authoritatively, like a flashlight-armed usher in a movie house, Maurice steered Dexter through the pull doors of the bus, and then turned, solemnly, half-waving, half-saluting the ladies of the committee.

"Good-bye! Goodbye!" screamed Dexter from the aisle of the bus.

Dexter and Maurice made their way to the rear of the bus and took seats near the primitive bath room facilities. The bus smelled of soured ice cream and stale cigarette smoke and burning diesel fuel and was unoccupied except for an elderly woman with a huge cameo broach pinned like a medal to her bosom and a bearded young man with a guitar who had his feet propped on the seat before him. The passengers

seemed unattentive to the pair boarding the bus; they both were making nearly successful attempts at falling asleep.

The bus had reached the first red light when Dexter smelled the tuna and retrieved Maurice's paper sack from the shelf that hung over their seats. He feasted on the sandwiches and chocolate cupcakes dutifully packed by Mary Ruth Ware and generously left the olives for Maurice. Maurice had opened a copy of *U.S. News and World Report* and was reading about a drought in east Utah when the bus moaned to a halt at an unimportant stop on the county border. A fat woman, half-carrying, half-dragging a fat little girl climbed aboard and waddled up the aisle.

"Wanda, baby, I think we'll just sit right here in back of these two nice men," announced the mother. She turned her head and grinned good naturedly at Dexter and Maurice; the two blue slits that were her eyes seemed buried in the fleshy mounds of her cheeks. Her arms hung like two watermelons with sausage fingers. Around her chubby throat was tied a string of red beads as big as baby's blocks.

Little Wanda, her daughter, for the most part was a mirror of her mother, only much shorter, much more groomed. She had a tremendous pink satin bow planted in her stringy hair and wore ankle socks trimmed with lace. She stared at Dexter, at his purple pants, at his Alabama hat with half a feather; he was licking the remnants of the chocolate cupcakes from his fingertips. Then she began to shriek in her shrill baby voice: "Look, Mama—a clown! Lookathere!!" She patted Dexter gently on the back with her plump little hand and cooed: "Hey, Mr. Clown! I love you Mr. Clown!"

Dexter still did not tolerate being touched unexpectedly upon the back, even by one so innocent. He slung his arms wildly, assaulting Maurice Ware squarely in the nose, and turned and uttered something so obscene to the fat woman and her fat daughter that the mother began to cry.

An almost threadlike trickle of blood flowed from Maurice's damaged nose. In an attempt to halt the tickle, Maurice held his throbbing nose and looked upward at the ceiling of the bus. Then, sounding terribly nasal, he attempted to explain to the offended pair the cause of Dexter's ungraciousness.

"Madame, my friend here is what one may term a spoil of war. He is a shell-shock victim, and now I am accompanying him to the state mental hospital down in Mount Vernon."

The woman stopped crying. She

handed Dexter an oatmeal and raisin cookie and Maurice a Kleenex for his nose.

"You poor, poor dears," crooned the mother.

With Dexter once again composed, and his own nose finally coagulated, Maurice Ware began to mentally curse Mary Ruth for the ridiculous predicament she had again placed him. He remembered episodes from yesteryear: the time when Mary Ruth had sent him down the street to reprimand a neighbor for walking his poodle in their yard and the poodle had taken a chunk out of his leg; the time when Mary Ruth had volunteered him to be Indian Scout troop leader at the church, and one of the scouts had set fire to his feather headdress, burning off his eyebrows; the time when Mary Ruth purchased a pair of undersized panties and he was dispatched to the department store to exchange them before an audience of whispering, laughing and pointing salesgirls. The list went on and on. He snorted loudly and his left shoulder

bobbed up and down more. He looked down at his watch—seven more hours of independence! This thought made Maurice smile and his shoulder move less. He tried to recall the words to the song about love on the elevator and hummed the tune softly to himself.

Dexter was beginning to complain of acute hunger pains when the bus pulled into a less-than-swanky bus stop with adjoining greasy spoon and lounge called the Paradise. Percy Pines was the proprietor, a man with thick, greasy black hair and a mermaid tattooed on his forearm. His wife, Palmyra, had a rotten spot on each of her two front teeth and a laugh that sounded like a neighing horse; she served as waitress, cook, hostess, and maid.

"We'll take two barbecues and two Cokes," said Maurice to Palmyra. "Now Dexter, you wait for our order; I'm gonna run outside a second and buy a paper outa' that vending machine by the door."

Dexter nodded and struck up a conversation with a truck driver from



Photo by Gordon Bugg

Tupelo who sat next to him at the counter.

Maurice inserted his dime into the slot of the orange and blue vending machine, opened the cage-like front to the contraption, and was immediately engrossed with a headline concerning a robbery in Barbour County. He failed to notice that the machine had closed upon the back of his trousers leg, like a hungry animal, until he attempted to walk back into the cafe; brusquely his leg was jerked backward. Frantically he tugged at his imprisoned pants leg, until he heard a whiny, soft voice echoing in his ears—"...are you my husband or my little boy, Maurice? Careless ought to be your middle name. All I do is darn what you tear up; mend and darn, darn and mend...I'm not Betsy Ross you know..." Even if it meant taking off his pants to be freed, he would not tear his trousers!

Sheepishly he knocked on the fingersmudged window of the restaurant that was near the vending machine. Dexter was still conversing with the truck driver. The fat woman and little Wanda were eating their French fries. The man with the beard and guitar was scribbling chords on a napkin. The elderly woman with the cameo medal was dusting her face with a powder about the color of milk of magnesia. No one noticed Maurice. Finally, grunting and heaving with the effort, he lifted the machine to balance on his flat buttocks and proceeded through the door of the restaurant carrying the contraption piggyback. "Mary Ruth Ware, you make me sick," he breathed with every step. Inside, the customers stopped talking and chewing and composing and primping, to stare at their frustrated traveling companion.

"Table for two?" neighed Palmyra.

Maurice managed a smirk before he ordered Dexter's assistance.

Dexter inserted another dime into the machine, opened the cage, and freed his chaperone. The group whistled and clapped at his escape.

Maurice, chewing on a toothpick, was still perspiring profusely as he boarded the bus again. Both eyes blinked uncontrollably now and he cracked his knuckles in an attempt to avoid chewing his fingernails. Mary Ruth always said, "Never chew your nails—it is the mark of a commoner!"

Little Wanda and the fat woman began to play games and sing songs in an effort to shorten their monotonous journey.

"Found a peanut, found a peanut, found a peanut just now..."

On the fifth stanza, Maurice gripped the wooly upholstery of the armrest and released his imprisoned throat

from the confines of his polka dot tie. Then he blurted: "Would you mind halting that stupid song?" The words had come tumbling from his twitching lips almost involuntarily, but he felt much better for having said them.

"I don't like that grouchy man, he's mean. Mama, why is that old man so mean?" whined Wanda.

"He's sick like his friend, baby," she whispered loudly so that Maurice Ware could hear.

Maurice watched the endless line of concrete winding southward as fast as he could see, the clumps of kudzu, the sprinkle of unpainted, wooden shacks—he glanced again at his watch—five more hours of liberty! When the bus rolled across the Dauphin County line, he knew his piggrimage was almost half ended.

"Dexter, get your Piggly Wiggly sack, we're almost there."

Dexter busied himself gathering his possessions, wadding up old paper sacks and gum wrappers and newspapers, and hummed "Good Morning, Mr. Zip-Zip-Zip." He had the energy of a hyperactive little boy about the visit the circus. He bade the other passengers good-bye as the pair moved up the aisle.

Maurice was snorting loudly and his eyes were twitching noticeably—the fat woman had thought he was flirting when he glanced in her direction. As the pair bounded off the bus, his shoulder bobbed up and down dramatically, as if his shoulders were attempting to wave good-bye without the cooperation of the rest of his body.

The Mount Vernon State Mental Hospital was three blocks eastward from the bus stop. Past a show shop, past a dry cleaners, past a washeteria they strolled. The gates to the hospital were of unadorned wrought iron, tall and broad with a brick base. The driveway stretched about three hundred feet up to the door of the compound and was flanked on either side by massive magnolia trees. In these wooded lots lounged some of the patients of Mount Vernon—a woman attempting to waltz with a gardenia bush, a man delivering a religious oration to a tree stump, a couple chasing squirrels and then one another with croquet mallets. The atmosphere was serene, far removed from the reprimands of Killcare County.

Maurice looked at his watch—four hours and fifteen minutes of precious liberty remaining. Already he could hear the voice of Mary Ruth Ware commanding him to wipe his feet, commanding him to buy milk at the grocery store, commanding him to scrub the toilet bowl. His mouth twitched so violently now that he looked like a

young lover practicing his pucker.

"I'll hold your Piggly Wiggly sack for ya', Dexter," offered his chaperone.

Dexter lumberingly, calmly walked beside Maurice. The absence of loud noises resulted in a Dexter Perkins that was almost dignified. He removed his Alabama hat as they entered the admissions room of the hospital; the place smelled of antiseptic floor detergent and alcohol.

"Welcome to Mount Vernon, gentlemen," greeted a shapely nurse with tomato red nail polish and heavy eyeliner. She grasped the twitching, bobbing arm of Maurice Ware and bubbled: "Mr. Perkins, the women on the committee told us that you were going to come and live with us. We are so happy to have you at Mount Vernon." She turned and smiled sympathetically at Dexter. "Now sir, don't worry about your friend; we'll take good care of Dexter!" She gave him an affectionate squeeze just for emphasis.

Maurice smiled and hugged the buxom brunette, winked at Dexter, and then sauntered up the hallway, arm-in-arm with the nurse.

Dexter Perkins could still hear Maurice Ware laughing when the door to the Mount Vernon State Mental Hospital closed abruptly behind him. He made his way slowly back to the bus stop and waited for the bus returning to Killcare County, all the while humming "Oui Oui, Marie" softly to himself.



virus

you invade
like
torrents of leaves
buffet and
fight
like moths
everpresent
i see only
the aura
and
through diffused
bottles
morning.

DM Petrizzi

FENTON FARNSWORTH

GOES TO A SINGLES BAR!

by Bill Holbrook

OH, BOY! MY FIRST TRIP INTO THE WORLD OF AFTER-HOURS ROMANCE!



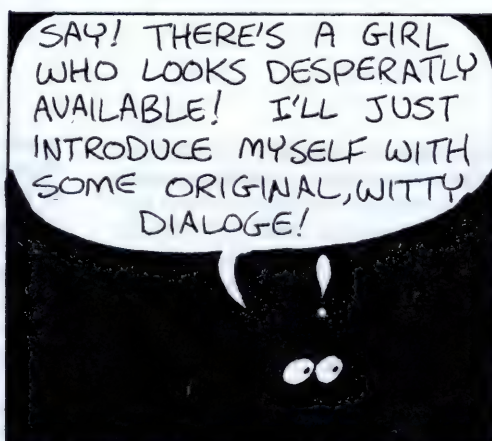
IT'S ABOUT TIME I MET SOME NEW GIRLS, ANYWAY! MARILYN'S GETTING TO BE A BIT OF A DRAG!



I LOVE THE ATMOSPHERE IN THIS PLACE!



SAY! THERE'S A GIRL WHO LOOKS DESPERATELY AVAILABLE! I'LL JUST INTRODUCE MYSELF WITH SOME ORIGINAL, WITTY DIALOGUE!



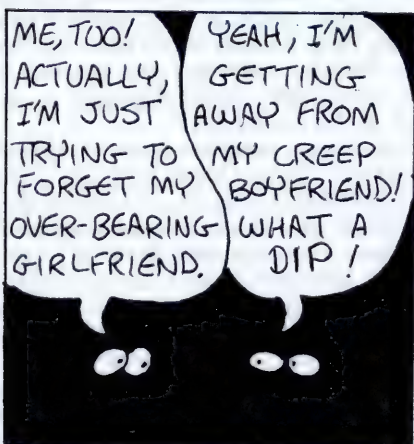
HI! COME HERE OFTEN?

NOPE. THIS IS MY FIRST TIME HERE!



ME, TOO! ACTUALLY, I'M JUST TRYING TO FORGET MY OVER-BEARING GIRLFRIEND.

YEAH, I'M GETTING AWAY FROM MY CREEP BOYFRIEND! WHAT A DIP!



SO'S THE GIRL I DATE! SHE'S THE ABSOLUTE PITS!

...AND THIS GUY EPITOMIZES THE TERM "PATHETICLY GROSS!"



THE ONLY REASON SHE DATES ME IS BECAUSE I MAKE HER FEEL SUPERIOR!

...AND I ONLY DATE HIM BECAUSE HE MAKES ME FEEL SUPERIOR!



MARILYN?

FENTON?



I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU HAD TO CLEAN YOUR HAMSTER'S CAGE TONIGHT!

OH, SHUT UP!



FOOTBALLMANIA!

Reprinted from *Thyme Magazine*, February 31, 1984

by Mark C. Winne

AUBURN, ALA.—It's their Mecca. Every year thousands of football devotees from all over the world make the pilgrimage to this otherwise-obscure southern college town. They come not to root for the Auburn team—nay, instead most dream of the day when their alma maters will defeat the gridiron gargantua. They come, rather, to marvel at the institution which has become the embodiment of the dreams and aspirations of football fanatics everywhere.

Strange as it seems now, football has not always existed so blissfully at the school that has won the last four national championships. Only six years ago, the War Eagles were mired in their third consecutive losing season, a hard pill to swallow for fans nurtured in the quarter-century reign of St. Shug. Shug Gerdun is, of course, the former Auburn head coach canonized by the newly-formed Church of the Fifty-Yard Line. (The CFYL is frequently confused with Judaism because of similar kosher eating habits. "The pigskin is sacred to us, so we cannot tolerate eating related products such as bacon or ham," explains Most Exalted Trainer Flags R. Downe.)

It was in the fall of 1977 that the seeds of change were first sown. Angry and alarmed, frustrated alumni began rumblings of discontent. Alumni Association Executive Secretary Buck Badberry issued a statement splashed across sports pages throughout the South, calling for greater athletic department autonomy and supporting head coach Doug Barfly. The Board of Trustees immediately called a meeting to discuss the situation. Observers in

the university community were amazed at the remarkable swiftness with which the trustees acted, since the distinguished body had been notoriously slothful in dealing with other, admittedly-less important issues such as academic quality or the welfare of students not on athletic scholarship.

Alumni flocked to the meeting and divided into three factions: one group wanted to give the athletic department more autonomy and dump Coach Barfly, one group wanted to give the athletic department more autonomy and give Barfly a raise, and still another group wanted to give the athletic staff unlimited power and dump University president Hairy Philpott.

Articulated one advocate of the latter view: "Auburn ain't knowed for its English department, and it's junk like that there that Philpott's worried about. We is famous for football!"

The result of that meeting was a two-year extension of Barfly's contract, though it wasn't due to expire for several years anyway. But the smoldering embers from that fall episode ignited into a ferocious bonfire at a spring 1978 meeting. And in the midst of the inferno, in a boiling pot, was missionary Hairy Philpott, surrounded by screaming alumni dancing in a circle like so many frantic natives. "War Eagle, fly down the field," they chanted hauntingly. "Ever to conquer, never to yield. Ugh."

Raunch Creep, who had risen to prominence as the president of the S.A.A.S., was chosen as Philpott's successor. The S.A.A.S. originally stood for the State Association of Auburn Supporters, but this implied support of all phases of the university including non-athletic activities. The name was changed, keeping the same acronym so as not to render

membership cards obsolete. The organization has since been known as the State Association of Athletic Supporters.

"Right proper name," remarked Philpott from his Bermuda retirement home.

Pervasive change began immediately under the Creep administration. The athletic department was abolished...and instead there was established an academic department. "We don't need all those fancy names for readin', writin' and 'rithmetic," said Creep. "But now we won't have no conflict between athletics and the rest of the university, 'cause athletics is the rest of the university."

University facilities were reshuffled. Ten-story Haley Center, once the home of the school of arts and sciences, was given to the football coaching staff because of its proximity to the stadium, which was renovated into the 150,000-person capacity Jordandome. The Trustees must have wisely foreseen the growth about to occur, because in 1978 when they approved the 12,000-seat first step in the massive expansion, the old seats in the stadium hadn't been filled for years. The foresight was particularly courageous, since the board was under pressure to use the money for other things like housing and parking.

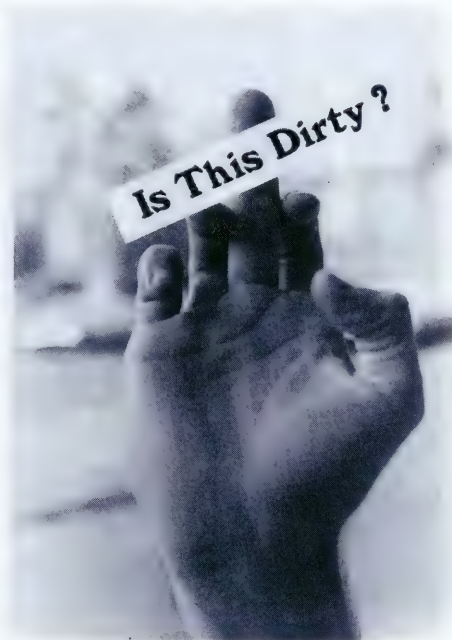
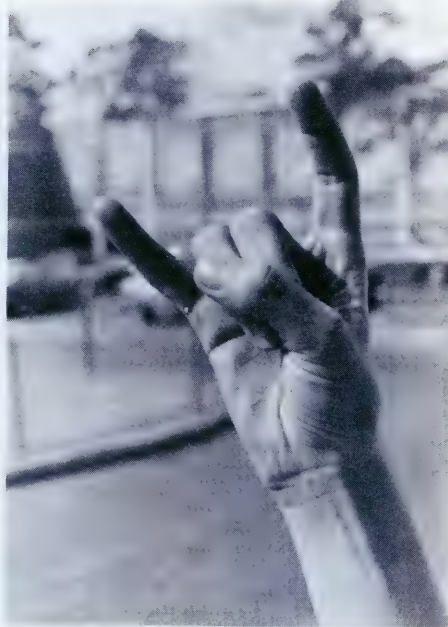
The new and improved Super-Sewell Hall was a featured selling point where blue chip prospects were concerned. Experimental cattle no longer needed for the now-defunct agriculture department provided fresh beef for several months, and recruits were impressed by the option of being able to eat their meat raw, hooves and all. The live entertainment in the rec room was also popular with the boys (see illustration).

The renovation extended beyond the tangible. Auburn's once-heralded spirit

was thoroughly revamped. A research team discovered that the University of Texas had achieved remarkable success with its famous longhorn sign. After failing to devise a Tiger sign or a Plainsman sign, the researchers finally came up with a catchy little gesture to go along with the third nickname, the War Eagle (see illustration). The War Eagle sign is particularly popular at the annual Auburn-Alabama game.

The Auburn Cheerleaders had, in years just prior to the rise of "the Fourth Reich" as the dynasty has come to be known, perpetrated some frankly stupid blunders. Once they misspelled the school's name on national TV in a "give-me-an-A" cheer. They drew heavy protest for leading a "Go to hell, Alabama" chant, viewed as particularly distasteful since they were playing Florida State. The final blow came with a publicized 1979 scandal involving a hotel room, the second string defensive line and a cheerleader. The incident was especially sordid since the cheerleader involved was the mike man.

An alumni push for cheerleading reform was spearheaded by Durt E. Oldmann, chairman of the Lets Expose Thighs on Cheerleaders Committee (LETCH). The first goal of LETCH, one which was accomplished quickly because of remarkable popular support, was the elimination of male cheerleaders. LETCH then pushed for cheerleading scholarships, which included room and board in the new Super-Sewell Athletic Dormitory, double-knit pom-poms, and orange and



At left is the famous Texas Longhorn sign, at right is the new War Eagle sign, depicting the eagle's ever-upward flight.

blue Pontiac Firebirds ("Cheerleaders ain't covered by NCAA recruiting rules," drooled Oldmann.) The cheerleaders' uniforms were also altered drastically (see illustration).

It is truly ironic that the man who is the personification of Auburn spirit, known to millions as "Mr. War Eagle," actually coached at one time for the arch-rival University of Alabama. But after signing a seven-figure head coach's contract, Bear Bryant quickly

saw the light. Bryant's salary met with slight resistance from a group of faculty dissidents who selfishly moaned that the money could better be used to raise their own salaries.

"Whatever the putative abilities of Mr. Bryant, such inequities in remuneration of staff members emblemizes methodologically unsound administration and is quite illustrative of the myopic naive realism so pervasive in this geographic region!" charged former philosophy department head Duhlost McKlown.

"In other words, your priorities are screwed up, you stupid rednecks!" echoed philosophy student Jim Locke, who had gained skill at untangling confusing language while on the editorial board of the old *Auburn Circle*, which had been the campus magazine until the Student Government Association halted funding because of a football-related incident.

"That so-called satire they did against football in the winter 1978 issue was inexcusable, mean and ugly," asserted SGA Budget, Finance and Salary-chopping Committee chairman Knavia Copenhagen.

Bryant, and assistant coaches Woody Hayes and Johnny Majors, achieved remarkable recruiting success in their first year at Auburn.



The Super-Sewell Hall rec room was one of the innovative new twists introduced during Auburn's football transformation. It proved to be a valuable recruiting asset.



Auburn's cheerleaders are unmatched in their enthusiasm.

Though the NCAA limited the number of football scholarships available to less than 100, Auburn signed 150 of the most sought-after high school players in America. Some prospects, apparently well-rounded athletes, signed scholarships in other sports but participated in football as well.

"Hell, we can't find a swimming pool big enough for him, let alone a pair of trunks," muttered swimming coach Eddie Greese upon meeting his new freestyler, 320-pound Merlon Suggs.

Other players worked at summer jobs to help meet the costs of an education. Roosevelt O'Hara, responding to allegations that his new car was an illegal recruiting bribe, said, "Listen man, I worked for that car, ya know."



A LETCH scout on a recruiting trip.



Auburn's cheerleaders model their new uniform.

Man, just cause Coach Bryant got me the job, ya know, that don't mean nothin. She-eet, I had to wash five cars to get that Mercury, ya know. Then they made me vacuum some upholstery before they'd give me an eight-track."

The four seasons that followed that first golden recruiting harvest are, like

Auburn's meteoric rise to the top, sports history now. At an institution that has finally shed an energy-wasting, hypocritically-professed devotion to academic and artistic pursuits, that has in the best tradition of democracy heeded the desires of the majority, football reigns supreme.



Poetry



Special Section

WINTER AUBADE

A cold morning
and a soft wash of light
enters the window
on wings.
The water that fills
the red-rimmed porcelin
is showing light a series
of changes
I have not seen in my life.
I bend over the bowl
and scoop water
to feather my face awake.
The light dazzles
my changing hands.
Light water I am losing
through cupped hands
shapes the half-globe
of your bare breast
where the light has just begun
to lay its gentle wing
quieter than I could touch,
though I would
if my palm were a shadow.
The room is changing
in a rinse of light,
refreshing in a way
I am just beginning to see.

—R.T. Smith

CAT

Prince of paws
and jungle grasses
creep your lithe
belly-drag passes.
Stretch out claws
in a still-born rush
on an unwary
seed-fat thrush.
Clamp joyous jaws
and with strut-high head
carry off your captive dead.

—Susan White

Summer rain and baling hay
And red-dogs in the sun...
Some things never come together.
Some things stay as one.
In you and I the tie is strong
And much too deep to see,
Composed of what has gone before,
And what is yet to be.
And what is yet to be, my love,
Has only just begun,
The summer rain and baling hay
And red-dogs in the sun...

Harold Penick

Denver, they call you
The prairie queen,
but you lie there
holding back the Rockies.
On one side snow and craigs
the other grass and sage

Made famous by Indian
and Trapper Too
at the fork of the Platt
and the Blue
Gold hunters climber the mud banks
and built a city
for cowboys to unglue
They all ride together now
Tourists, businessmen and farmers a few

Below the jagged granite
in virgin white
the Arapaho watches
the hungry pilgrims
do rape in his home.
Who knows from 40,000 feet,
beneath the blanket of smog
what violations are happening
To a Queen

—Johndrow

The Mark of Cain

If I sin, thou dost mark me, and dost not acquit me of my iniquity
(Job 10:14)

Two friends one old, one agnostic
One night met to talk in reveries
Of ancient times, myths and legends
"Hear now, "the older speaks,
"Before you open that book of children's lore
Let's settle by the fire and toast the ancient whore
Oh mother sly, cunning muse of native sin
Let us celebrate your joy, before death sets in
You may start now, if you please
The description of Cain is quite amusing
Should be good for talk and boozing.
"Ah Cain, "replied the friend,
"Yes of Yahweh, Jehovah— or to that end.
You ought to know the story well
From church or Sunday school
Wherein one learns of things
Without evidence—or parallel."
"Yes of Cain," the younger said,
"Cain the first murder, to whom the god
Spoke saying, Now you are accursed
From the earth having opened once
To receive your blessed brother's blood;
Be sure that it never shall for you.
Cursed by you vagrant to wander the earth forever
—Not too bad, could be worse
That silly little trifle of a curse..."
"But my friend that this god marked Cain
So that none could kill him—"
"But that seems a blessing, if I..."
"However my friend that does not quite approximate the end
You see the earth should not receive him
And therein his pain begins.
The tale continues of him
In the Book of Tophet
Excluded from the Bible
Now open that holy writ and start with it."
The younger now uncomfortable finds a place and begins,

"Such are his burning blazing eyes
That he always seeks his doom
Hollow steady searching, showing only gloom,
While carrying with death the semblance of a tune.
A tune for filthy streets, faces, and tombs
That light ne'er meets
Occasionally you and I it greets
We hear its melody in our melancholy
And one day soon, too close by
Softly now on some lonely street
As he and death race out its beat
We hear it...
Soul after self
Letters pointless on grey stone

Step after step
But never reaching home
Like blood baked on rock
The soul dries black
Step after step
There's no way back
Never rising up
Only going down
Just step after step
Never reaching ground

"And with that soft tamping beat
And with the rats falling to the streets
Cain had sense enough to know
What he is forever to undergo,
And that night he turned, at his right hand
A ragged, ruffled cat did stand
And screeched and wailed and did fall dead
This man had the mark upon his head
He, who wanders the streets of every city
As he has a thousand other pretty
Towns, feeling famine and plague with all
Through blood and whiskey, passion and brawl
Down through eternal ever changing streets
Paralleling a face he's ne'er to meet
Still through every body his senses pass
Feeling every trifle pain, each breath his last.
He dries with every soul he sees
Cut with the grain he's chaff on the breeze.
Winnowed to be planted then cut again
Such is the wandering fate of Cain.
Through Judas' neck he felt the pull
As he did the stones of Paul
And with Peter upside down blood drained from his mouth
Feeling too Caesar's stab and Henry's gout,
And so faced with such a life of pain
Such a list of trial all for Cain,
As one would wish his god's life eternal
Has Cain prayed at least by mercy, inferno
For weighed against the sensations of such strife
Some fire, all fire is heaven to this life.
But not so fire but Becket's fall
And blades and ropes and lashes all
Flailing through the ages...
Chronicled are countless pages
through which Cain's body, torn and scarred
From torture and the burning bullets of war,
Swings often hanging from a tree
If not by neck then by hair the monster be
Swung by bloody scalp, Grendel, Hyde, or wolverine,
Who screamed in anguish, entrapped in ravine
Fighting misfits, tearing bodies into mutilated bits

Frenzied feeling all of it.
Pain and more pain heaped upon the same
A wealth of pain from the master of the game.
Searching in some brain where lice are teeming,
Now a man with a scar between his eyes and screaming
Searching for a term—some call lobotomy
Searching almost alone, imprisoned in his body.
A ragged broken vial is renewed today
Blown to be shattered then swept away,
And blown again molding breaks into scars
Still hot with pain, still red with war
He seeks and craves in each last breath
To escape through pain the life he regrets."
"There now that's enough of it!"
"But there's more, battle axes falling into heads,
In the charge of Priam's army—ten thousand dead...
Cain stands and falls, witness to all one may see,
Such wonders of war and such killing sprees
And of sneaking into hades a thousand times,
Hiding under the robes of whores caked in grime,
And of being found out each time, by death's own father,
Laughed at, spat upon, sent back to slaughter,
And how the dead cursed and reviled him,
Who was the tool to their every deathly whim
Damn you, they cried to all eternal pain
Who brought and was for us death, all the same."
"Stop, that will be enough, do you hear?"
The younger now glances up eyeing the old man,
"You needn't sing that song again!
Oh my God it isn't you—it comes to—

"Say now, I'm sorry my young friend,
Please pardon my outburst; if you please
I'm old and sometimes get upset
Caught up by things such as these"
And the old man rose to go to bed
He cumbered up the stairs
And when he near approached his stead
He peered out over the railings
And with an eager glance of his eyes he said
"I must retire, but one favor if you please
See who's at the door and meet his needs,
Before...you leave."

Later on it that eventful evening
Smiling in satin sheets upon a downy bed
The old man finally drifted into peaceful sleep
Satisfied the bargain was once again complete...
It would be another year or two
Before Cain must again be his tool
But he woke that night in restlessness,
And felt, before surprise set in, the tune's caress.

—D.G. Sproul



estate of grace

las' nite down in dothan alabama
we were resurrected by the spell
of duke wellington and his midget negro band.
passing by sammy beckett's bar and grille
we heard that rhythm
cascading out the door
and shouts of true believers
so we leaped in too.

and lo
there was theosophus funk
striding at the keyboard
and charlie fingers
embracing with the bass.

now mama bessie billie
couldn't take that rhythm standing down,
so she joined the band onstage
and steamed us in the blues.

then the black duke himself stood up
and blew chorus after chorus
on his shiney solophone
and the stomping of the faithful
raised the tables off the floor.

so we can tell you now
about the state of grace:
unless you find a spell
you're like a man without a face.

—A.J. Wright



Drawing by Tom Causland

ODE TO MY FRIEND

Do smile at me through mossy glass
And hurl the dark clouds wide,
And let me feel those golden globes—
The worlds your dark locks hide.

The fates frame that gingerly
Imprisons boyish soul;
The springtime form that celebrates
Each rise—a dewey knoll.

Oh, moonmoth hands that hover soft,
I sing what none can measure
But most of all a smile of silk
As orientals treasure.

Oh, I would now be dust and air—
A product of the earth—
A thinking banquet for a worm—
If not for David's birth.

—J. Hughes

Consciousness ebbs
And flows
Artworks of thought
Sculptures of ice
Beautiful in their presence
their transience
Infinite intricacy
So fragile a film
Oft broken
Ne'er repaired.

—Hef Daniels

I am the grass
the cool, green grass.
Come to me,
and I will refresh you.
Lay upon me, crush me;
I will spring back, ready to take you again.
The soil beneath me is warm.
Plant yourself in my midst
and I will grow with you
and cover your bare spots.

—Sherry Doyal

EMPTY

It is not hawks or eagles
that circle the empty blue spaces
of mind, now that I slammed the door goodbye.

There is no grandness in my freedom.

Nor do hummingbirds and robins
flitter the fragile gift of spring
in compensate for our wintry stormings.

There is no gladness in my freedom.

The only thing that circles
in the immense and non-ending blue
is a lone vulture,
whose caaws and screeches
die before they reach me.

And there is only silence
and the fact of the vulture.

—Scarlett Robinson

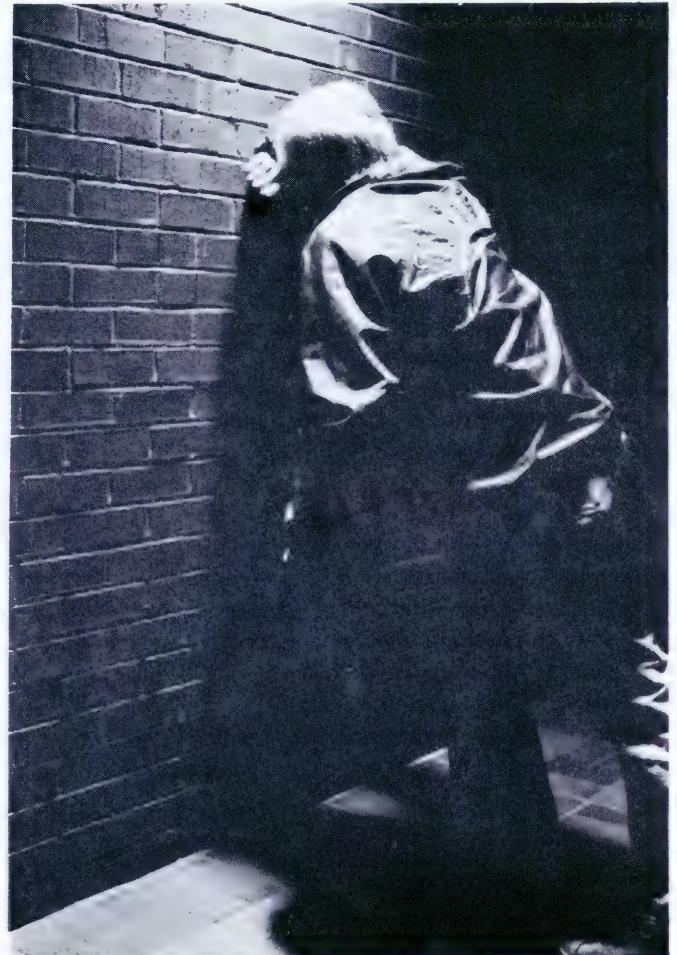
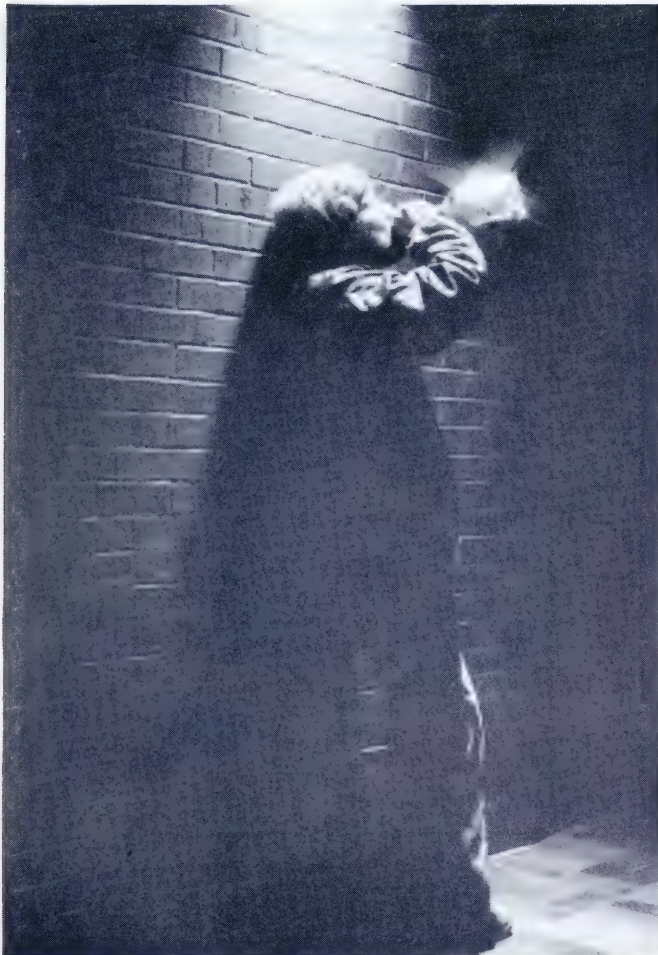


Photo by Vickey Hunt

Muscles strain, eyes bulge
and sweat and slobbers string
Grunts and moans turn
to bellows of frustration
as each lunge in countered

A whistle ends
the eight, day long, seconds
and the victor does a back flip
into the dirt

Like a walking frog
he moves
To avoid the defeated's
kicks and gouges (hooks)

Rescuing his best John B.
and gathering his flaccid tool
of hemp and skin,
His lank frame
a rack of pain
He hobbles off

To have a shoulder set and wrapped

While the vanquished
Turns and trots
head high by the humped victor
To salute the crowd
Knowing not
that he has lost.

Johndrow

TO A NURSE STUDYING HER LESSON

Mostly you are white legs
Membrane of stockings
An anaesthetic film
Of voluptuary dream

Shoes of an institution
Ponderous purity
Of antiseptic step

Your uniform your honor
Chastity belt of profession
Near a nun's denial

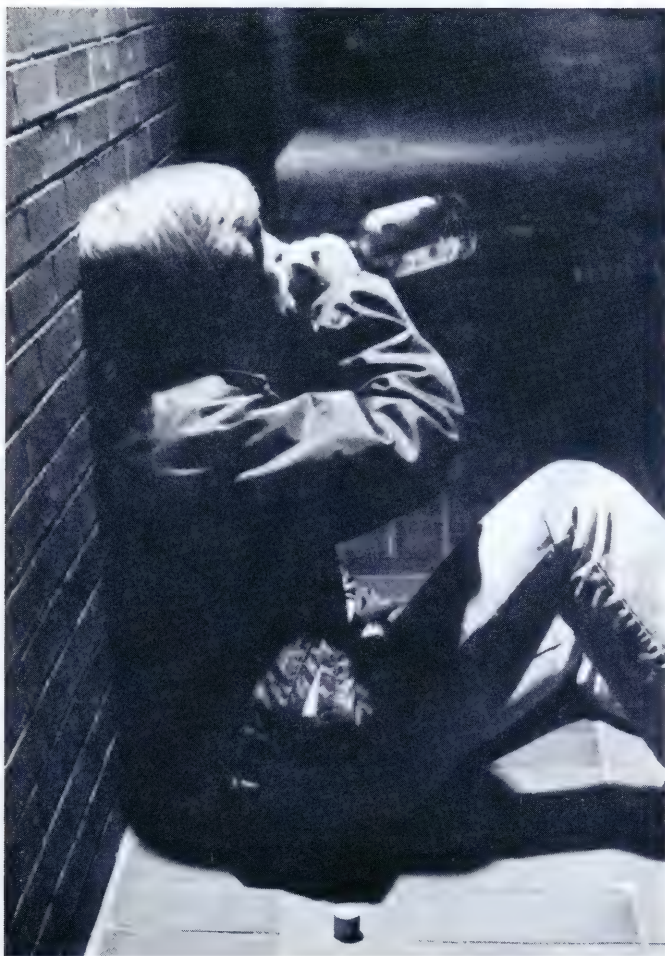
Otherwise, you are face,
Arms, fingers on glossy page
Of thighbone
Iliacus, femur, rectus femoris . . .


Eyes move in surgery
Across labels
Like rib to rib fever

Skin contained
Behind pin and pockets
Slender musculature

Completely in white
The color of old bones.

—Donald Secreast





Does the wind blow through you?
Does the wind of change carry you away?
Like milkweed are you
looking for another home?

Chuck Measel

CLOUD BLUSH

Why are the clouds embarrassed by the sun?
What funny story does it have to tell
that makes the whirl giggle;
pink ripen in innocence?
What secret treasures does it offer?
What last touch or stolen kiss brings a
hot soft crimson rising
in milky puffs of shyness?
Oh, what secrets does it whisper before it
slinks away, that turn a cheek so soundly red?

—Susan White

nightmares aren't so long in coming
though they hide with frightful speed,
disappearing with the morrow—
leave us holding planted seed.

—Beth Nicholson

Illustration by LLOYD MALONE



**Illustration
for
a Braille Bible**

there is a page
between Old and New
for me
for you
there is a page
a blank page
blind with space
sightless with light
there is vision
but
there is no sight
where dreams drink darkness
much the same
as flames devour fuel
until all that remains
is the white and black
of smoke and ash
there is a page
to the right of delight
to the left of death
there is a page
to be felt not seen
a page thin as skin
that contains blood like red ink
for holy words
and tears like invisible ink
for words of sin
a page filled with emptiness
that spills the opposite
there is a page
a page in a braille Bible
bound with flesh
and illustrated with touch
tangling
a thousand words
to a thousand stares
that forsake us
when we sigh
crying
each breath out
a prayer
that each breath in
dies to reply

—Vic Moose

Water tower truthfulness,
Prophetically parading across our porches.
Desperately done driving,
Disregarding doormats.
Musty, mystery monsters
unwelcome, though accepted.
How could you be rejected?

Blistered-barefoot bliss.
Love in the backyard,
hard behind the shed.
Sweaty clothes
and garden hose
and mother's running errands.

Now hearts have grown cold,
Youth's grown Old
and Old is getting older.
Don't cast a backwards glance, my friend.
All that you'll see,
Head over shoulder,
Stiff-legged soldiers,
Water towers in power.

—Sherry Doyal

Wind...cool and beautiful to see
They tell me it's invisible
But I watch it on the water
And dancing with the trees
The wind is not supposed to talk
Yet the tales I've been told
Crying through windows
And laughing when it's cold
Many people worry about me
What I say can't be true
So I'll sit and listen to the wind
And leave the worrying to you

—Mark Brunner

Illustration by LLOYD MALONE

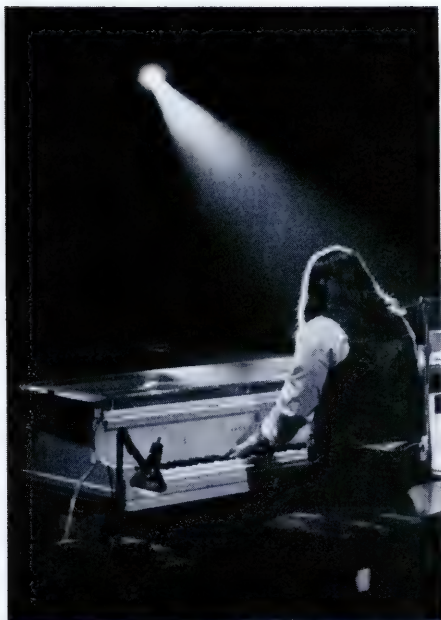


Photo by Patty DiRienzo

NEO-REALISM

(to the rhythm of Annabelle Lee)

She was a kid and I was a kid
in our condominium on the shore,
But we loved with a love far greater than the love,
well at least it was a little bit more,
Than the love of older couples did soar,
Than the love of far richer couples did soar.
Then she ran off with a vacuum cleaner salesman from Peoria.

—Rick Harmon

DESTRUCTION BAY

Alone, the duck takes wing.
This expanse of ice and snow which
once was a lake, once was his home,
Is unfriendly now.
He is alone.
Months ago his brothers retreated,
Seeking warmer lands.
But he remains.
The wind whips, swirling spindrift,
The sinister sky hides the sun,
What little sun there is.
This bleak land, its vastness, its cold,
Seems to deny life to those within its void.
But the duck flies.
He waits for spring.
Alone.

Rick Adcock

THE GIST OF THE MATTER

In the blue-grey wake of the moon,
Upon a mountain terrace,
A couple dances in fluid graceful movements.
They sweep deliciously near the unguarded edge,
But the force of their motion
Keeps them in orbit around the smooth
Floor of the eight mile high patio.
She sighs for the love between them
And with his lips he touches her cheek softly—
Thunder bolts and lightening
Very, very frightening—
And I dream of a war in heaven,
And a rider on a white horse faced
A rider on an ashen horse.
White breasted doves bombed
Red throated lizards who writhed
In the flaming napalm.
I was stunned, to say the least.
In her kitchen on East Seventeenth St.,
Mrs. Ellis (scared of bugs) raises her shoe
Above that wicked brown roach
Which lurks under the edges of the counter,
On the sides of the refrigerator,
And around the potatoes in the cabinet.
"Why would He make such awful things?"
In heaven, there is a howl and then a silence:
And the dust of battle settles.
The price has been paid,
Atonement made.

—Joe Bird



Photo by Betsy Butgereit

OF A FIRE IN THE WOODS

When I heard him say,
 "I want to get a girl
 and walk in the woods all day,"
 I wanted to applaud.
 Of course, I didn't.
 He was just a stranger
 I overheard in a crowded place.
 Too often we must pass
 these outcroppings of excellence.

Later, I sat at a restaurant window
 and looked out across the road
 at a fire in the woods,
 at oaks and maples,
 their limbs aflame
 in the late October sun.

I remembered the first autumn
 we were married
 how we had walked along a track
 behind our trailer,
 gathering the leaves,
 before so many, red and golden,
 had turned to black,
 before we were tricked
 by the Yankee traders,
 trapped in The Iron Cage
 at the edge of the woods,
 before simplicity and vision
 were lost.

I want to return...
 I want to fling my spirit
 on a fire in the woods,
 those tongues of flame,
 those limbs of fire,
 climbing in the blue and twisting air.

I must return to the woods
 as a monk returns to Mass.

—Fred Donovan Hill

Illustration by Karen Crosser

LES CORPS DE L'ESPRIT

A mote in my eye
 And armies rush by
 Invisible armies rush by

Spirits pound air
 As they thunder somewhere
 How they lightning and thunder somewhere

There's an urgent salute
 And a triumphal toot
 O, prophetic triumphal toot

Then the trees give a cheer
 And the closest clouds fear
 They cower and curdle and fear

For there's change in the wake
 See the purple hills quake
 In the distance, the purple hills quake

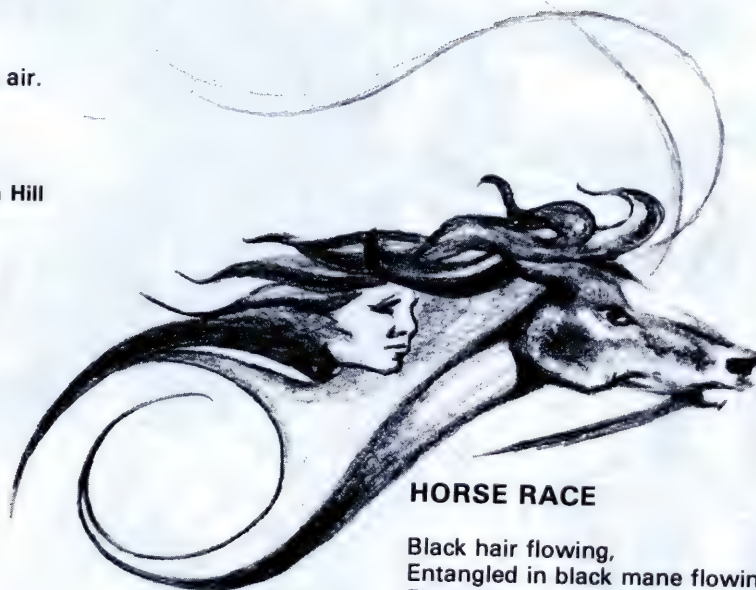
But the armies flow on
 With a sepulchral moan
 'Tis a life-taking, thought piercing moan

Yes, they quickly move on
 Leaving me all alone
 And I fear—blinded, mute and alone—

That the mote may be I
 In a general's
 Pity me, in a general's eye

And, if, then, 'tis I—
 I'll resignedly die
 As I'm wiped from the general's eye.

J. Hughes



HORSE RACE

Black hair flowing,
 Entangled in black mane flowing.
 Ruddy face against sable neck.
 Body slumped over
 Body stretched out
 In long strides.

Tight grip and tight knees.
 Rippling muscles.
 Racing. Winning. One.
 Horse and rider.

—Emily Cherry

THE GRAVETENDER

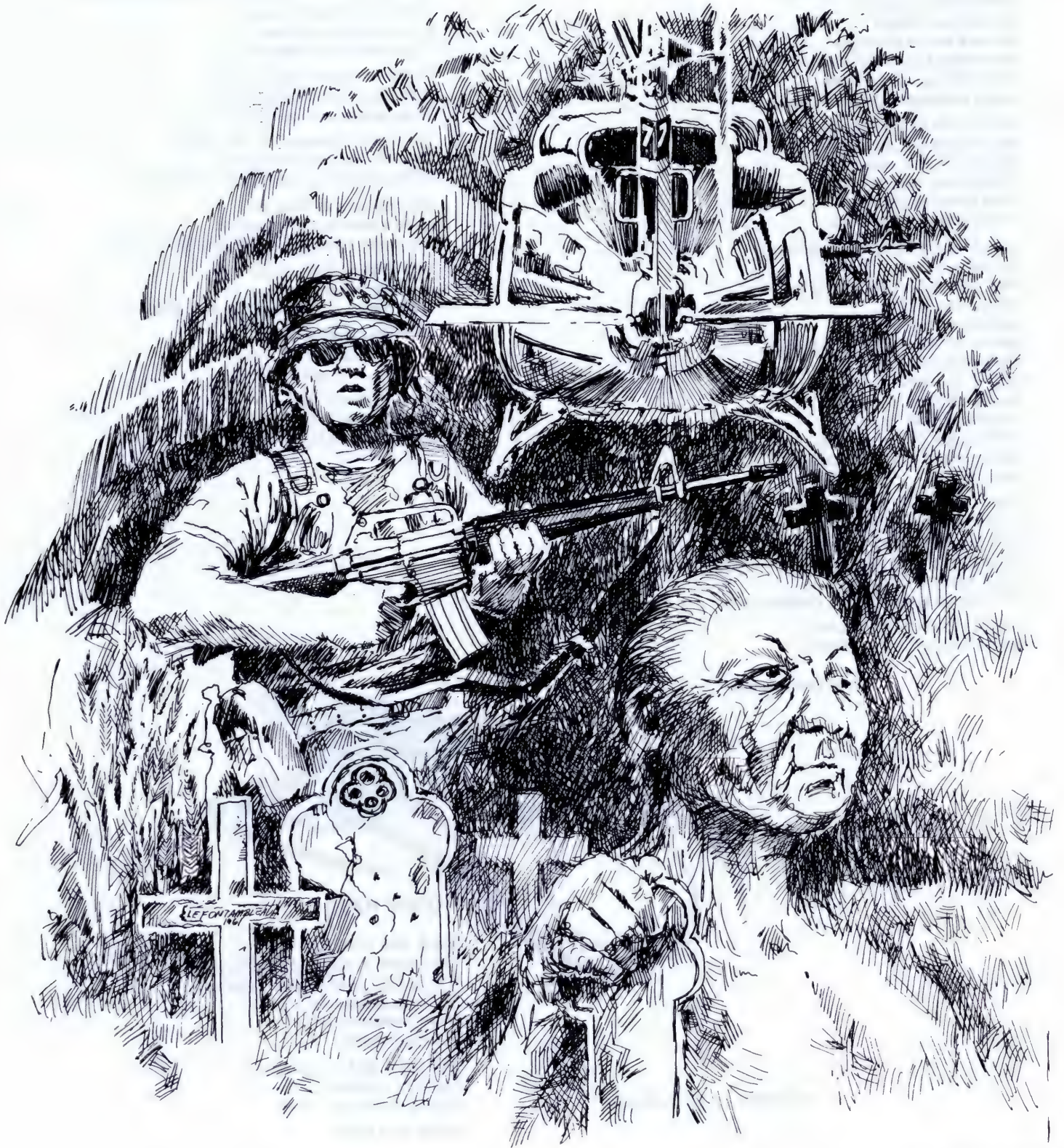


Illustration by Danny Coker

FICTION by Robin Carter

The wizened little man squats before his hootch and watches as his neighbors are herded aboard the helicopters. He is like peasants everywhere, ageless, patient. If the world wishes to trample them daily, what is to stop it? And today is one such day. The ancient eyes flit back and forth above a nervous grin as soldiers—his countrymen, they call themselves—move the people into the great dark machines. Yet how can they be countrymen, who would take a man from his village, from his ancestors?

A plump colonel with a swagger stick is joking with two officers, off to the side, away from the dust stirred by scuffling feet and whirling rotors, and the old man would watch him more, seek to divine the mind of this soft mandarin, but there is suddenly someone in the way. He looks up, past the web belt with its canteen and holster, along the buttons—five—of the green shirt so hot in this climate, looks until he finds the eyes beneath the great helmet. Kind eyes, perhaps, eyes such as his grandson had before the army took him. But they will not meet his, and the old man is puzzled. He tells the young soldiers before him that his grandson went away to the war; quick words about help in finding him interrupt the tale, and as they help him stand he searches their faces again, wondering why they lie. For now he catches their gaze, and knows fear at the dead-eyed emptiness he finds there. When they turn their backs for a moment, he runs.

Another helicopter groans into the air, lurches in a semi-circle above the trees surrounding the village and heads for the coast. Inside, in the dark and the din, babies will scream and the soldiers curse. Packed in like beasts, some of the people will urinate in fear and the soldiers will curse more. Men who, until that morning, had tended pigs and cattle, smell paint and kerosene for what may be the first time. But the old man does not know or care about these things. He fears the colonel and the empty soldiers. He will stay here to tend his ancestor's graves, alone if need be, rather than go with them.

It is not a long run to the graveyard; it is a small one and close to the hut. In fact, they are separated from each other only by a meager vegetable garden. Two pigs root in this garden now, but one will be slain in a few minutes by the dead-eyed soldier. "To keep food

from the enemy," he would say if asked why, but it is really done to vent his anger at losing the old man. "Well, leave him, then," he will think, as he slits the pig's throat. "He will soon enough be able to tell his ancestors first hand what a free-fire zone is."

For some months thereafter, the old man lives on alone in the deserted village. He has no place else to go and will stay here until he dies. The angry war is too large to notice one stooped peasant toiling with his buffalo, and it passes around him.

He has always been lucky in war. The French were already supreme before he was born and the Japanese had come after the fires of his youth had been banked. When the French returned he took no part in the struggle against them, then as now wanting not to leave his village. The same emotions guide him now that the Americans are here.

The Americans. He has only met them once, on a day when his granddaughter clung moaning to his leg as he held out to a passing convoy the body of her murdered infant. He had stood in the road so they would be sure to see, and reply, but the trucks had driven around him, the somber green giants staring down impassive during the moments they beheld him. Someone threw some chewing gum; another took a picture.

Now he only sees them from a distance and then only those in the sky. Occasionally he will stop his work in the fields, feeling the jets before hearing them; soon they appear, small at first but quickly large and dark and tearing the sky in their passage but as quickly gone, a half-seen thread of smoke the single mark of their existence.

Then one day the dead-eyed soldier is back. He stands before the old man's hootch, knowing from its appearance that someone still lives there, and he calls out. The enemy is coming, he says, during the monsoon they will be here. He asks the old man to come out and repeats that he will help find the grandson, but he is a city man, short of patience, and ordered to do this thing. When he gets no answer he uses threats, then, angry, drives off to search the rice paddies.

The old man watches from the jungle. The ones this violent fellow calls enemy are not coming, he knows. They are here. They have spoken to the old man, spoken of war and of struggle, called themselves friends and taken his pig. The mines they leave for the Americans make it dangerous to work in the fields, but there is no more need as they have also killed his buffalo.

A rumble sounds as he returns from hiding, and he looks for signs of the monsoon. The only cloud, though, is a small one rising from behind the trees in the direction of the fields. His smile is a grimace as he returns to his digging, a shallow hole not much larger than himself, next to his grandson.

The bullet, when it came, was silent, fired from almost a mile away by a bored Marine who afterward went back to his comic book. The old man crumpled in the paddy road like a puppet whose strings had been cut, and his jaw made a sharp crack as it hit the ground. The conical hat rolled for a moment like an unclaimed coin, then it too fell and lay still in the dust.



the morning after the night before (for d.v.)

i have slipped safely
through another corridor
of darkness—
no crash and burn
this time,
just the sighting of a woman
who spoke to me in a white light
and showed me paintings as vivid
as a red rose would be
against her midnight hair.
all evening
i felt only slightly surrounded
by the party's restless characters
and mild conspiracies
while she talked and walked
and hypnotized.
but much later
even under skeins of stars
brightened by the clear cold air
i couldn't tell the difference
between the darkness and that hair.

II

so now
with the shawl of dawn
settling around my shoulders
i am safe again,
rescued from allusions
by the sun
scratching at the night.
yet like a blossom
floating in a bowl
her face remains
poised in the mind's amber,
as if nightmares
were just the sacrament of dreams.

A. J. Wright

The Mongrel, Mangy,



Marvelous Mule

by Martha Duggar

"Missouri's Out Front in Mule Production—the only safe place to be!"

"No wonder the mule is so ornery—he's the only common animal with no pride of ancestry and no hope of posterity!"

"The mule is haf hoss and haf jackass, and then kums to a full stop, nature discovering her mistake."—Josh Billings

The poor mule, hard worker though he is, has been the brunt of many cruel jokes, and jokes reveal people's attitudes about man and beast better than any Gallup Poll.

But the mule deserves a better name. He practically built the country. Mules dragged gold back from the Klondike,

pulled lumber wagons in forests, even pulled streetcars before electricity ended their reign. They fought in both World Wars and now are content to carry harmless tourists up and down trails in the Grand Canyon. Mules even pulled barges through canals. "I got a mule, her name is Sal," as the old song goes, "Fifteen miles on the Erie Canal." Yet the good ole mule cannot outlive his rotten image, unlike a Teddy Kennedy, a Barbi Benton, or (perhaps?) a Richard Nixon whose pasts, however full of bridges, beds, and bugs, is soon forgotten.

The mule, a cross between a jack, or male ass, and a mare, or female horse, is a hardworking hybrid raised strictly to be a draft animal where neither a horse nor an ass can do the trick. Perhaps luckily, the mule is sterile

because of differences in the chromosomes of his parents, but occasional cases of female mules producing foals have been reported. A stallion and a female donkey, however, if allowed to mate, do not produce a mule but a smaller "hinny," vastly inferior and never intentionally raised.

But who would want a mule? A book by Maurice Telleen called *The Draft Horse Primer* has the answer. The mule, it says, can stand a lot of heat like its papa the ass, yet he has the size and power of the horse which he gets from his mother, the mare. The mule also inherits patience and surefootedness from the jackass, and he has smaller feet than the horse, an advantage for certain kinds of work, such as cultivation. "A mule holds a shoe longer than the horse because his hoof is more deeply cupped and is tougher," writes Jeff Burkhart in a 1950 *Science Digest*.

Furthermore, "He is tougher than a horse (his skin)," Telleen says. "He is more careful than a horse—that is, not as likely to blemish himself, and his sale price does not suffer as much when

would say he is more numerous now than ever in the form of a few legislators in Congress. As Jack Mills says in his book *History of American Jacks and Mules*, "The Democratic

'The growth of America during the latter part of the nineteenth century can be told, in part, in terms of mule statistics.'

he is blemished. He is, by and large, longer-lived, and in extreme old age the mule is generally more useful than a horse of the same age." Telleen also tells us that a mule isn't as prone to overeat, or founder, as a horse, "Thus you might say that mules can put up with more mismanagement and just plain ignorance on the part of the teamster." And as Gary Webster in an article in *Natural History*, 1956, informs us, the mule is less impatient under heavy loads, "more cautious in places of danger, and less susceptible to disease. Like his father, the mule thrives on a diet so coarse it would make a horse ill. As a work animal in hot regions, he is magnificent."

Some people have the very wrong idea about mules that I once had, that mules are some form of neuter animals, sexless completely, deduced from the fact that they can't bear offspring. Hear ye, hear ye, that is not the case at all. A mule is most definitely either a male or a female, called a horse mule if male, and mare mule if female. In fact, to keep him from frittering away his energies in idle pursuits, and certainly in fruitless effort, the horse mule is often "fixed" like a steer. Oddly enough, castration makes him grow angular looking, but less mean? I doubt it. After he has gotten worn out, or if he is cheap, very plain, or unsound in one or more respects, he is called a plug mule, and lives out his feeble days with that ignominious title.

Mules are a part of the South. They don't deserve such a rude dismissal into oblivion as they seem to be getting. After all, they may come back if the prices of trucks, tractors, and gasoline get much higher! Having been run out by such contraptions, they may have the last bray and become useful once again. But hopefully, the agriculture students who graduate from college in the next few years won't be behind a plow too soon, burning to a crisp in the sun, struggling and sweating to open a small row for a few pole beans, let alone trying to plow a 500-acre Lee County pasture to plant pimento peppers! I don't believe, come to think of it, that the mule would care for a comeback at that price, either. Vive la John Deere and Massey-Ferguson, but remember the mule. He might return. And many

Party adopted the donkey, which is to the Jack family what the Shetland Pony is to the horse family, as their party emblem. The Republicans adopted the elephant. The dictionary defines the Jack or donkey as an animal noted for stupidity and obstinacy. As to the stupidity and obstinacy of a jack ass, he is a piker compared to some of our elected representatives."

Which brings us, via the logic of Alice and the Duchess, to another point. What of the mule's past?

Well, Solomon himself rode a mule when he was proclaimed king. Christ rode into Jerusalem on an ass (not a mule, but very close kin) and, says Mills, "As recently as 1970, archaeologists have verified from diggings that turned up texts and art of ancient Mesopotamia, that warfare 45 centuries ago used wild asses to draw chariots."

Balaam's ass, his tale told in the book of Numbers in the Old Testament, turned out to be smarter than his owner—both more aware of the presence of the Almighty and with a keener sense of justice.

The Moors left mules behind them long after they were driven out of Spain in the 13th century. Gary Webster says in his article that the Spanish King and Queen tried desperately to cure the Spanish people of riding mules, since by this time the mule was so strongly linked with the hated Muslim invaders. The word "mule" may have derived its derogatory connotation from the strife between Moslems and Christians, he says. How perfect an illustration of the horse-versus-mule controversy is found in *Dox Quixote*, with the bearded would-be knight sallying forth on an old white mare called Rocinante, followed meekly by the humble sidekick, Sancho Panza, and his plug mule.

Webster further traces the mule through the California Gold Rush. "Mules staggered westward with miners and gear, packed millions in gold back to the eastern coast.

"Even as late as 1875, more of America's freight was hauled by mule trains than by railroads."

The War Between the States was a chance for worldwide fame for the mule. Mules then began going abroad,

slightly a la Carter. Japan and Russia began buying them for military purposes after seeing how, by the tens of thousands, they hauled Rebel and Yankee ammunition, supplies, and guns. England began to use special Mule Batteries for service in India.

As J. A. Burkhart heartily agrees, "The growth of America during the latter part of the nineteenth century can be told, in part, in terms of mule statistics. They built the railroads, plowed the fields, and harvested the wheat. Teams of eight, twelve, and sixteen powered the reapers and the combines. They turned the grist mills, built the roadways, forced the sugar out of the sugar cane. They groaned and sweated and kicked—but they did not stop."

Burkhart goes on to say that the mule industry had a few good years during the boom of World War I and immediately after. "In addition to the home market, there was a big demand for Missouri mules in Europe. The Germans, having seen what the Missouri mule could do on the Western Front, were the largest importers."

An old newspaper clipping dated 1919 which was reprinted in Jack Mills' book tells that more than 45,000 Army mules were engaged with the army overseas during the first World War. More than 100,000 were used with troops in the U.S., making room for much hee-hawing, kicking, balking, biting, and other mulish tricks. "Several thousand came from England, 9,000 from France, and 11,000 from Spain." Kissinger would have had a field day with such an international polyglot, so canny and only half as stubborn as the usual kind of Begin and Sadat.

Mules are a part of the South.

After World War I, however, the mule's numbers started to decline. Burkhart says that since 1925 there has been a steady decrease in the number of mules in the United States. What a contrast to the scene in the mid-1800's. With cotton selling like gold, plantations owners throughout the Southeast were clamoring for mules, and, says Webster, mule production in the U. S. at that time "was rising faster than that of any other farm animal."

Their steady decline has been inevitable. Trucks and tractors are cheaper for the amount of work they can do and generally last longer. Considering, though, that the life of a mule is 17 to 19 years, I wonder how long the Toyota and Chevrolet trucks hold up in comparison. The great disadvantage of a mule, of course, is the work and worry

he puts on his owner. Trucks, at least some of them, aren't quite as temperamental, and sputtering and cutting-out are the closest they come to a kick.

Mules have had an interesting lineage. They come on one side from draft horses such as "the Percheron from France, the Belgian from Belgium, the Shire and Suffolk from England, and the Clydesdale from Scotland," according to Jack Mills. Where large, active mules are required, as in the cotton belt in the South, thoroughbred stallions, giving activity, have been crossed with Percheron mares, giving size, and in Texas and Missouri such cross-bred mares are mated with jacks of large breeds (asses) to produce the large mule. Similar methods, reportedly, are also adopted in southern France, Italy, and Spain, France being the master and perfecter of the mule, their special type being the long-haired, shaggy-looking creature often seen in old children's storybooks. The foundation stock of the male and female ass (jack and jennet) were all from Spain and France, but principally from Spain, says Mills.

Sometimes there is difficulty in getting a jack to cover horse mares, especially where he has previously covered donkey mares and also where a disparity of size exists between the two. For this reason, artificial insemination is now being increasingly used in mule breeding, what little breeding is still being done.

After the War Between the States, a good many jacks and jennets were imported from Italy but they were of small and inferior quality.

Just after the Revolutionary War, the King of Spain gave George Washington a jackass named Royal Gift, and two jennets. Washington's old friend Lafayette, sent another jack named Knight of Malta, from the Isle of Malta, and two Maltese jennets to Mount Vernon. Royal Gift was truly a fine ass. He stood 16 hands tall.

Washington, dabbling in genetics for fun and profit, experimented with the

Royal Gift was truly a fine ass.

gifts. He crossed the Maltese jack with the Andalusian jennet and produced a jack he called Compound. (Maltalusia would have been better.)

Compound was "the father of a thousand mules," to be inaccurate and destroy an old Spanish nicety at the same time. When Washington bred mares to Compound, he came up with fine mules that sold for as much as \$200 per head, Mills says. "Considerable interest was then manifested in the

breeding of mules, not only in Virginia, but Kentucky, Tennessee, and other states which soon fell into the same line."

From the meager start made at Mount Vernon, the mule industry grew. Missouri, Tennessee, and Kentucky have always been the primary mule-producing states, with Missouri mules perhaps the most famous for stubbornness and meanness. It is enough to know, as Burkhalt tells us, that Missouri mule buyers took the shoes off the hind feet, and for years the railroads refused to carry a Missouri mule with shoes.

Southerners from every state remember the days of the mule in all his glory and belligerence. My grandfather, too, tells me of these things, and his story runs something like this.

Mules used to be used in the fields and then, after the day's work was done and the sun was going down, they were put together in a mule lot where they



would romp and play, biting each other on the neck and frisking around for hours on end. A funny habit Grandpa laughed about was a mule's way of falling down in the dirt and wallowing—turning over and over in the dirt like a hog, or like a bird taking a dust bath. He knew of one old mule that refused to eat until he had wallowed awhile.

Connected with this common habit came a joke about a Yankee tax collector who visited some black folks one day. Looking at their mule he asked in a pseudo-Latin accent, "Yes, and what do you value her at?" "Oh, she ain't wallerin dese days," came the reply. "She gots a sore on her back."

Another common sight used to be people "drenching" sick mules, those with colic and various ailments. The men would pull the mule's head up with ropes tied to a tree and pour about a whiskey-bottle full of linseed oil down her throat. You had to be careful, though, not to use boiled oil, because that had lead in it and would kill the old

critter. The drenching reportedly worked, too. It has been out of style for years, Grandpa added, due to better remedies.

Raised on a farm in Wayne County, Tennessee (accent on Ten, always!) which is about 40 miles north of Florence, Alabama, was Prof. J. C. Grimes of Auburn. He remembers the mule named Liza that learned to stop working the minute she heard the lunch bell. Her hearing was sharper than Mr. Grimes' and his son's, and so they knew lunch was waiting when Liza stopped stock still in the middle of a row of plowing. "Beck," "Liza," "Zeb," "Ruth," and most any country name were the names of mules. "They were almost a part of the family," says Grimes. "We had a barn with individual stalls where they were fed, just like people have their own room. They'd go, if you'd leave the doors open, into their own stalls," he recalls.

Back then, a man might pay \$300 or \$400 for a good mule. A mule got 10 ears of corn in the morning and 10 in the evening, plus an ample supply of hay for roughage. "If the door of the corn crib was left open, the animals would stand there and eat enough corn till they'd founder. Their feet would get sore, and they'd have a fever. Then their hoofs would come off. Then they were just about ruined. It rendered them worthless." When that happened, Prof. Grimes continued, "We just turned 'em out in the pasture on a grassy field and let 'em graze. When they died, we drug them off to some wasteland." There was no rendering company nearby to turn the dead animal into dogfood.

Mrs. Grimes knew a mule named Sundown. Sundown was clearing the right of way for a railroad in Wayne County, Tennessee, and wouldn't go a step further the minute the sun set. "They are *NOT* dumb! They're smart," she says. Most people would agree with her that mules are much smarter than horses. They get their sense from their father, the jack. "A mule won't go where he can't get out," one expert told me. "They're not dumb, just stubborn." Added to this evidence is the fact that a horse, some say, will knock himself out, but a mule never.

There is a "true story" about the mule scared so badly by dogs that it brayed and threw the rider, and the mule that got frightened when he was young and shook in his traces ever after as he passed by the scene of his former fear. Dr. Charles Isbell, retired from Auburn's School of Agriculture, recalls these stories. In his childhood days when he lived 15 to 20 miles south of Buck's Pocket in North Alabama, he got kicked by a mule or two. He thinks maybe the mean streak in mules is



Illustration by Eddie Jones

some old form of protection.

"But if you *know* a mule," I naively asked, "how do you handle him then?"

"If you know *them*," he said smiling, "you'll stay out of their way!"

Perhaps the mule's final glory came in 1976 when Americans celebrated the Bicentennial with a coast-to-coast horse race. The race began in New York and ended in San Francisco. Horses and their riders went as hard as they could, covering only 30 miles a day. They would stop at the end of the day and rest, the same horse continuing the next day, or as soon as he had recuperated. Well, the Arabians and Pasofinas were taking top prize until they hit the desert. But it was a victorious mule that rode into San Francisco, conqueror of every breed and halfbreed. A 1970's version of the tortoise and the hare if there ever was one! For those who will always defend horses, yes, it's true that for short distances, a good horse is better. For a long, arduous journey a mule can stand more strain.

Of course, a man can run the marathon (26 miles and 385 yards) in a little over two hours, while it takes both a good horse or a good mule a day. Maybe the old Southern jokes that likened white men to horses and mules to Negroes were egalitarian at heart, after all, though I'm sure they weren't meant to be!

STAN GETZ RECORD

God, listen to that sexy slut scream.

She wails her pain.

Caressing me, tempting me,
Velvetine fingers
probing into my soul.

Coat of Sassafras sweetness
covering moods that turn suddenly nasty
with a shift of a finger
or a quiver of a lip.

"It's only a record,"

Susan tells me,
Jealous of a sexier mistress.

Rick Harmon

THE PLAY

The lines I have, I know quite well

The part of me, is me.

From scene to scene

I've got it down

Even if someone else does not.

But where do you come in?

You're not my agent

Yet a whole new scene appears.

The script is unusual,

but like it, I think

Just a little more time

And I might even appreciate.

Keith Jung

FOR EYES ONLY

FICTION by David Petrizzi

12-18-2176

To: Issac Rolfe, Inspector
General
Defense Intelligence Division
Urantia Agency
From: L. W. Barron, Captain
Chief, Observance
Sector 6, Internal Affairs
Re: Probable Violation—Internal
Security Code; Article 3, subsection
14, Regulation 32.1. Failure of
Agency members to report contact
with enemy alien agents.

Sir:

As specified in the above regulation and pursuant to Agency security it is necessary for the enclosed intelligence scenario-transcription to be given immediate attention.

Please be advised that the Observance was made with all standard analysis including psychic, metabolic, and physiological computer sensors. In addition, video and audio receivers were activated. Special attention was paid to Paragraph 6.2 in the above mentioned Code which pertains to rights of General Staff officers. Memory modules place time of Observance as 0700 hours, 12-18-76 Urantia Modular Time.

What follows is only a partial scenario-transcription. The alien intrusion and subsequent introductory remarks are not included in this communique. Severe electro-magnetic disturbance rendered all Sector 6 sensors inoperative until filter combinations were computed. Exactly forty-eight seconds.

Also be advised that all memory modules are enclosed as well as other concomitant materials. All duplicates have been destroyed as specified in the Code.

For purposes of clarification the unknown alien intruder has been Code Designated: Erebus.

No attempts were made to summon security because no alarms were activated and the Observance Ethic strictly prohibits any interference. After Observance the Station was placed on mock battle stand-by.

This communication and enclosed scenario-transcription, dossier, and memory modules have been seen by only you and me.

It is my recommendation based on the enclosures that General Blaine E. Davidson III, Director of Department of External Relations, be put under immediate investigation, and all contents of this communique be reclassified as **TOP SECRET**.

ENCLOSURES:

The following scenario-transcription, memory modules and 3W26 Personal Dossier synopsis are classified:

FOR EYES ONLY

ISSAC ROLFE,
INSPECTOR GENERAL
L. W. BARRON, CAPTAIN
CHIEF, OBSERVANCE
SECTOR SIX

Personal Dossier Synopsis

Name: Blaine E. Davidson III
Status: General, Director Department of External Relations.
DOD: 8-9-2121 Chenko Modular Time
POB: Yavr' Colony, Chenko
Education: Graduated top 5%, Urantia Academy

Specialization in: Diplomacy, Paraphenomenological Studies, Strategy, Astral Navigation

Duties: Responsible for planning, maintaining, updating Agency battle contingencies, counter-strike strategies, and actualization of interstellar diplomacy

Synthesis

General Davidson has a distinguished career within the Urantia Agency. His efforts have led to the destruction of all renegade movements except one: The Sheol-Orcus Movement.

A man with no family and no illness, General Davidson is considered priority 1-A in value to the Agency. He has held the position of Director, Department of External Relations, for 17 sessions. Prior to that position he served on Command Station Council of Advisors, and before that directed Agency research into twenty-first century papaphenomenological studies.

For all intent and purposes, this member of the Agency is eligible under current directives, for promotion to status of Commissioner. There are no blemishes on this record.

PLEASE REVISE TEN DAYS
AFTER THE FOLLOWING DATE:

12-12-2176 Urantia Modular

....electro-magnetic disturbance....

.....forty-eight seconds.....
"Let's not be silly about this," said Erebus casually. "You don't need any proof and you don't want any proof."

General Davidson nodded, very slowly. "You're right, there's an—an aura. A feel. Something new and different that I have not experienced, only read about."

"Of course it's new," replied Erebus. "You've never seen me before, not directly."

The General pondered over that statement with a visible intensity.

"Let's not waste time," said Erebus. "I'm in a hurry and I'd like to get this settled."

General Davidson looked at Erebus directly. There was a nebulous intensity as if he were on the verge of perceiving something or someone—yet it was not there. The only feelings present were horror and fear. He tried to look away, failed and at last came to the point. "All right," he snapped. "What is this you want to get settled? Why have you come to me, anyhow? I certainly didn't er—ah—call you up."

"No," said Erebus, "but a human named Ruankko did."

"Ruankko? The one who—"

"The head of the Special Services branch of the Sheol-Orcus Movement, to put matters in your own terms."

"Well, you're certainly a special service," the General mumbled to himself. His lips were dry; this, he told himself would never do. He took a deep breath, and became very nearly calm. "What did he do, set you onto me? Because that won't work, you know. It—"

"He didn't set me onto you," Erebus broke in. "As a matter of fact, he would be very annoyed if he knew I was here."

"Then what the devil—?"

"No offense," Erebus said, and grinned. The grin nearly lost General Davidson his hard-won calm. "It's just that Comrade Ruankko offered me a deal."

The General closed his eyes. That way, he told himself, he appeared to be thinking, and he didn't have to look at the grotesquely magnetic figure which had popped into his private, securely-locked office to talk to him. "It's no surprise to find you on the side of our ancient enemies," he said.

"Oh, now, you mistake me," Erebus replied in a silky tone. "I don't take sides. I don't have to. You humans do quite enough of that to keep me occupied. No, as I said, Comrade Ruankko would be most irritated if—"

It was surprising how much more composure the General found available with his eyes shut. "Now you're the one who's wasting time," he snapped. "What are you doing here?"

"Ah," sighed Erebus, "the military mind. Efficiency, forms, reasons..." There seemed the echo of a chuckle. "However to put matters in a nutshell, my dear General, Comrade Ruankko offered me a deal. He's given me quite a good bargain for your death."

"For my—" the General opened his eyes and quickly reclosed them.

"Exactly," said Erebus with great composure. "He has promised me the burning alive of every inhabitant of the colony Yavr' on planet Chenko. Thirteen hundred people. Not a very large colony, of course, but then one that wouldn't be missed for quite a long time. It's not a bad offer, for one man."

"The...burning alive..." General Davidson again opened and resealed his eyes, the vision swirling in his head. "You mean..."

"He will see to it that the entire colony is burned alive, if I see to it that you are made quickly, efficiently and entirely dead." The chuckle came again. "The means, of course, are left to me. I've been entertaining some rather intriguing ideas..."

"Then you're going to— you're going to kill me? Now? Here?" Panic fluttered in the General's breast.

"Oh, no" said Erebus. "Once again, in a nutshell, General, have you got a better offer?"

There followed a prolonged period of silence. The General, at last, managed to find a sentence. "A bargain? What sort of bargain?"

The voice of Erebus became carelessness itself. "Oh, you know the sort of thing I like," he said. "Or you ought to. By reputation, if no other way. And, by the bargain Comrade Ruankko made with me."

A colony, the General thought, burned alive... screaming... dying..."I suppose," he said cautiously, "it's no use appealing to your..."

"To my better nature?" Erebus asked. "I'm afraid not. For one thing, I haven't any, you know."

"But—well, the sort of offer you want, I—I can't even think of it. It's not possible." General Davidson stammered.

"Then Comrade Ruankko is to have his way?" asked Erebus.

"I—" the General spurted.

"I'm warning you," Erebus interjected. "My ideas are very interesting

indeed. Though I doubt you will have the leisure to enjoy them. And then again," he continued, "there is the thought that you will be handing the good Comrade, on a plate, so to speak, his dearest wish." He lingered over the last few words, let them echo in the General's head.

Well, the General asked himself sternly, what was this centuries-old war for? Men sacrificed themselves in wartime. Yet he was valuable, he knew that: he had a head on his shoulders, he could think and command and lead.... Well, it wasn't egotism. Ruankko wanted him dead, and Ruankko was not famous for acting at random. He was valuable. Perhaps, in fact, he was worth oh, thirteen hundred or so ordinary men, untalented for this kind of war. But to condemn that many to death—to hand them over to a devil's whim... About his own death General Davidson could be calm enough after a second or so. Men died, and that was that. But to give Ruankko the advantage in this struggle, to give him (as Erebus had said) his dearest wish. It was, he reflected bitterly, a very nice dilemma. Ends and means again, just as it had been in school...how long ago? Ends and means... the war versus the imminent death of...

"Well?" queried Erebus.

General Davidson opened his eyes. They remained open. "Wait a minute," he said suddenly. "Let's think this out a little further."

"Have you an offer?"

"Listen to me." He seemed to be able to see the form of Erebus now. "Ruankko wants me dead. Why?" The General's voice was full of urgency.

"He is a member of the Sheol-Orcus Movement, along with all that ancient squabbling that almost predates me. At the moment that seems to be reason enough. Silly, of course, but there it is," replied Erebus.

"He wants me dead because I'm valuable to Urantia," the General said. "Because as long as I'm around, it isn't quite so easy for him and his kind to figure out a plan of easy conquest."

"Well?" Erebus seemed impatient.

"Well, if you kill me," the General said without any hesitation, "and there is a war, the war will be shorter, and that will be less to your liking, won't it?"

Everything seemed to stop.

Erebus chuckled, and nodded, and thought and then, slowly, nodded again. "So that's your bargain?"

"Not really," the General said. "It's the nature of things, if I die, and the war comes..."

"I get less out of it," said Erebus. "And thirteen hundred people won't come near to making up for it. I see." He paused and then said again, "I see..."

Yes."

"And?" General Davidson said in anticipation.

"You are," Erebus replied, "perfectly correct, I shall refrain. Yours is the better bargain."

"I..." General Davidson was talking to empty air. There was no one, nothing in the room except the General himself and, of course, his continuing thoughts.

Five minutes passed before General Davidson whispered, quietly, "My God. What have I done. What have I really done?"

"Lucifer Barron?"

"Uh—yeah, what is it?"

"I'm your relief."

"Is it that time already? Time does seem to fly" he pondered to himself in a low mummur.

"It only happens once a day when you're on stand-by," said the relief. "Go ahead back to Quarters, I'll take over here."

Captain Barron got up from his post. Stretched. He shuffled a few papers into a briefcase, then reached over hastily to pull one from the scenario-transcriber.

"Anything of interest occur during your Observance?" asked the relief.

"Uh—nah—spent the whole shift working on my novel. Not a whole lot to do in the wee hours, you know. Even with the General back and us on mock-stand-by." He stretched again. "I've been programming this scenario-transcriber for almost seven hours," he said. Closing the briefcase and stepping to the doorseal, he waited briefly as his identification was computed. When the seal opened he turned and waved once to the relief.

Captain Barron passed through other security measures successfully and walked briskly to the surface lift. It was full, he would have to wait. He mused over plot complications that were developing. A thought crept upon him that he was going to have to eliminate one of his characters. One of his favorite characters. The lift came.

He rode silent fantasy to the surface and up six more flights to the central corridor connecting Quarters with Dining. Briskly, he moved to his Quarters. A short walk past snack dispensers and a few attendants cleaning up a minor vendor-machine rebellion.

Once inside Quarters, he opened the briefcase, folded the enclosed papers, placed them along with several memory modules into a shuttle tube labeled *FOR EYES ONLY*, put the tube into the delivery system, dialed the proper codes and pressed the button.





Tales from the Crypt, Local-Style



The sepulcher awaits.

PHOTO ESSAY by Wanda Kenton

Far from the bustling center city where ruins from a Sunday explosion still lie scattered on the streets, far from the grinding metropolis traffic and hidden from students' casual view, they lie quietly, disturbing no one.

The Auburn and Opelika cemeteries are hushed; yet, one can stroll through various graveyards and discover poetry, fine artistry, and history.

"'Twas an awful, yet pleasing treat," remarked prominent judge Samuel Sewell of his first cemetery visit. No, a graveyard expedition might not seem like an ideal date or Saturday afternoon outing, but there is actually a peculiar enjoyment in seeing Death's postscript.



Iron fences around family plots were common until the twentieth century.

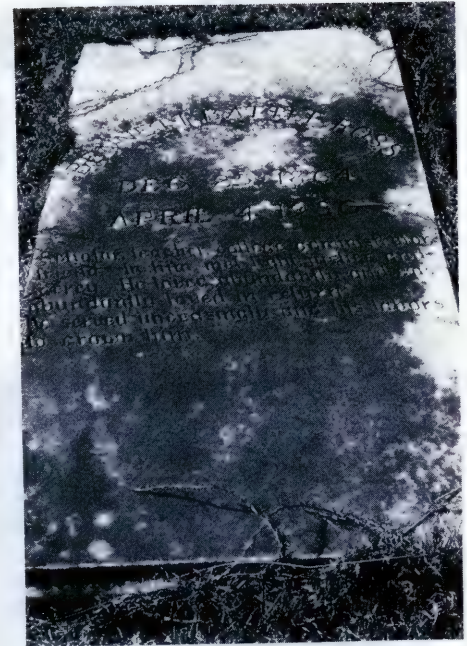
Pine Hill Cemetery, located on Armstrong Street, is one of the area's oldest burial grounds. Burial began here about 1840, so the graveyard is as old as the city of Auburn itself.

Pine Hill has many remarkably old, unique tombstones ranging from the standard ground slab to a larger, stylized and elaborate 12-foot monument.

Also buried in the cemetery are some prominent Auburn citizens including William LeRoy Broun, Auburn president in the 1880's; Dr. John W. Drake, the first University surgeon, after whom Drake Infirmary was named;

Charles C. Thach, former English professor and A.U. president around the turn of the century; Andrew Pick, major general in the Corps of Engineers; Bennett Battle Ross, dean of chemistry in the 1920's; and Dr. George Petrie, former dean of the Graduate School and Auburn's first football coach.

Of particular interest are ninety-eight Confederate soldiers, who, according to former Auburn University Registrar Charles W. Edwards, lie buried beneath the ground of Pine Hill. The soldiers range in age "from the very young to the rather old, and in



The grave of Bennett Battle Ross, for whom Ross Chemical Laboratory is named.

rank from drummer boy to general." A monument erected to twenty-eight unknown soldiers reads:

*Nor shall your glory be forgot
While fame her records keeps,
Or honor points the hallowed spot
Where valor proudly sleeps.*



Unmarked and sunken graves are frequent at Baptist Hill.



About three years ago black and blue candlewax was discovered alongside some of the graves. Evidently, people other than curious genealogists roam through the graveyards. In fact, four or five years ago vandals prowled through the cemetery yard, shattering headstones and damaging graves.



Dean Road Cemetery, also known as "Baptist Hill," was established in the late 1860's as a cemetery for blacks. Now it's a conglomeration of weeds and unmarked, sinking graves. When Dean Road was paved into a four-lane highway, city construction workers ran into some unmarked graves and were forced to relocate them in the cemetery dwelling. There is a possibility that some unknown graves may still lie beneath Dean Road.

Westview Cemetery, established in 1955 more or less as the successor to Baptist Hill, is located at the dead end of Westview Street.

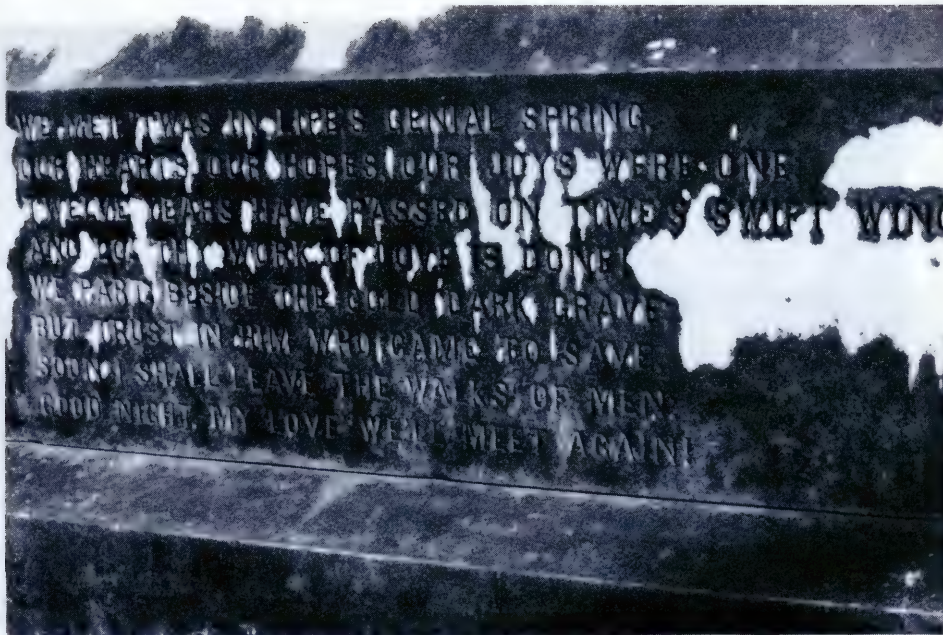
Memorial Park, Auburn's newest cemetery, is characterized by monotonous, flat modern markers. The City of Auburn bought the land on East Samford Street in 1945.



Rosemere Cemetery (originally Opelika Cemetery) was established in the late 1800's and was filled to capacity by 1930. The quaint cemetery has several aesthetically-pleasing statues. Unfortunately, many pieces of fine artwork are crumbling at Rosemere; many graves and marble statues are literally falling apart. In 1930 Rosemere was extended by a new portion of land kept much neater than the original. It's headstones are more typical of today.

Evergreen Cemetery is, frankly, regarded as primarily for blacks. It is located off Alabama Street and was established in the early sixties.

In addition to all of the established and recognized cemeteries, many smaller graveyards in the area lie obscured by high grasses, woods, and debris. To many, this may seem strange, but private burial far from 'established' cemeteries was commonplace many years ago.



*Tis hard to break the tender cord
When love has bound the heart
'Tis hard to speak the words,
Must we forever part?
Dearest loved one, we have laid thee
In the peaceful grave's embrace
But thy memory will be cherished
'Til we see thy heavenly face.*



Memory Hill, another Opelika cemetery, is located on Columbus Highway. The cemetery was established in 1960 and is privately owned by the National Memorial Services Insurance Company of Birmingham. A twenty-foot cross located in the center of the grounds lights up at night, symbolic of the light of the Lord, radiating even during the darkening hours of death.

Located on Frederick Road is Garden Hills, a sparkling, nicely-maintained cemetery. Constructed in 1950, the cemetery has many lots for sale by the City of Opelika.

The character of a graveyard rests in its epitaphs. These inscriptions come in a wide range of form and lettering styles. Some epitaphs give a sketchy biography, while others relate a particularly noteworthy incident in the life of the deceased. Many proclaim and recall love for a mate "who passed first beyond the portals of the grave." Frequently during wartime, the epitaphs serve to explain the cause of death such as "he died a soldier in defense of his country."

In local cemeteries, many epitaphs are as polished as good poetry and indicate not only excellent writing, but skillful craftsmanship as well. Among the most interesting:



Isolated and uninscribed sarcophagus.

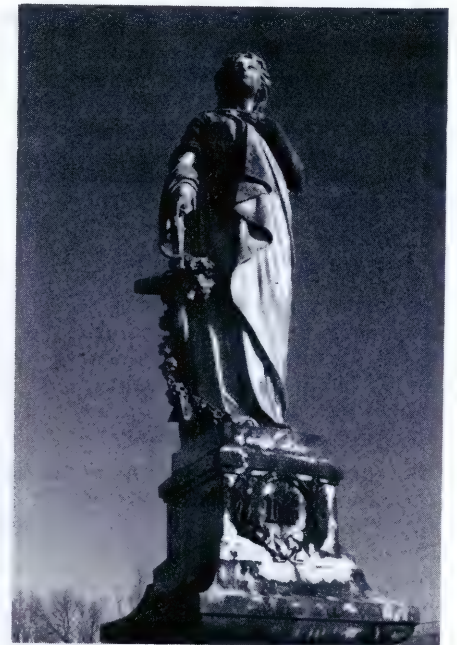


*Though thou hast left me here below
Thine absence still to mourn
I would not call thee back again
To bear what thou last borne.*

*She who now slumbers in this lowly
bed
Once o'er each household scene a
luster shed
And shone the mild star of domestic
life
As daughter, friend, companion and
a wife.*

*Behold me now as you pass by
As you are now, so once was I.
As I am now, so you must be
Prepared for death, and follow me.*

*In life he loved, cried, gave security
to his family.
In death he still loved and cried, but
we miss him dearly.*



And from Margaret M. Coffin's book,
Death in Early America, we read

*All ye who read with little care
Who walk away and leave me here
Should not forget that you must die
And be entombed, as well as I.*

This pool-table stands over the body of a semi-pro
poolshooter.

The Waste Can

By J. P. Kaetz
(With apologies to T. S. Eliot.)

I. BURIAL OF THE EXCESS CHICKEN BONE

April is the meanest month, breeding
Tax forms in desperation, hoping
For a pair of fresh socks, sighing
Because spring training begins.
Now is a good time to run through
The other seasons.
Summer.
Winter.
Fall.
So? you ask, and in the interest
Of exercising my first quarter German, I say,
"Ich komme aus Alabama. Ich bin Student."
Preposterous.

And why is the red rock?
How in Hell should I know.
Ask a Geology major.

This being a cinematic poem, I
Must present the cast:
The Phoenician sailor - Charlton Heston.
Belladonna - Mary Tyler Moore.
The man with the three staves - Art Carney.
The Hanged Man - A random corpse.

Unreal city,
Obscured by the smog.
A sign reads, "Welcome to Los Angeles."
Do not breathe deeply."
Now is the time to quote
A popular song.
Shake shake shake,
Shake shake shake,
Shake your booty.
Or is it "bootie."

II. THE GAME OF PARCHEESI

The chair in which she sits is
The finest vinyl money can buy.
The G. E. Soft-white light bulbs
Glint brightly off the Frigidaire,
The formica counter, the toaster,
And the automatic dishwasher.

"Not tonight, I have a headache. Speak to me.
You never take me anywhere. When
Was the last time we went to the opera?
The movies? Bowling, even?
What is that bat for?"

Thunk!

0000-00-000

Drowning in a sea of love
Yeah, Baby, WOOOOOOOOOOO.

Aretha Franklin, eat your heart out.

Seeing that I have neglected obscure
Literary quotations, let me throw one in
Here.

"Rot."

You figure it out.

III. THE FIRE WATER

I, Tiresias, though pretending to be blind,
Am in reality a peeping Tom.
I am also married to a watermelon.
Literally.

The undergraduate student, hoping for a
Good time, invites the doctoral student
Over for a "study session." Ha-ha-ha-ha.
After some talk of Tennyson, Browning,
And a glass of port, or two, or seven,
He smiles lecherously, and quotes this verse.
"Ribbit, ribbit, ribbit, ribbit, quoth the frog.
Bow-wow, bow-wow, bow-wow, bow-wow, also said the dog.
Not a solitary utterance ever spake the flea.
With all of this now said and done, please come to bed
With me."

Eeeeagh aagh eeegh
Eyoweegh oww umph

The doctoral student, a karate expert,
Caroms the fool off the refrigerator.

If you leave me now,
You'll take away the
Very heart of me.
Woo-oo-oo no, no,
Baby, please don't go.

Dribble dribble dribble
What a shot
Whoosh

IV. DEATH BY BOREDOM

Fleabound the dalmatian, a fortnight dead,
Is really beginning to get ripe,
So could you have someone pick him up.

What do you mean,
You won't touch him unless he is in
A plastic bag. Well let me tell you
Something, fella,
Fleabound may have been a dog,
But you're a son-of-a-bitch.

V. WHAT MY MOTHER SAID

Hey, what is it with the
Nasty mouth in the last section?
You're in for it when
Your Father gets home.

VI. AN EXTRA SECTION, IN AN ATTEMPT
TO BEAT THE COPYRIGHT LAWS,
OR;
WHAT UNCLE SAM SAID

So you are an unemployed bum, huh?
Let me give you a few words of advice.
Sha.
Give me your money.
Shana.
I really need your money;
We need the neutron bomb.
Seriously, we do.

Shanana.
Plus, the national debt is out of sight,
And oil prices are doubling,
And we need more funds for the
Billy Carter Fried Chicken franchises.
Shananana
So
(Oh God, I can't stand it.)
Get a job.
Sha-na-na-na, Sha-na-na-na-na-na
Get a job
Sha-na-na-na, Sha-na-na-na-na-na



Photo by Ford Risley

'Drafted in 1901, Obsolete in 1902'— Alabama's Constitution

by Lauren Steele

At the beginning of each legislative session, progressives in Alabama get anxious. "Will it be this year?" they ask themselves. "Will this be the year Alabama gets a new constitution?"

So far such questions have been asked in vain, but the move for a new constitution gained fresh support when Gov. George C. Wallace told the House of Representatives during his State of the State Address that he supports home rule.

Home rule is the central issue in the new-constitution controversy—and the main obstacle. Home rule simply means that each town or county can, to a degree, decide its own fate—govern itself. As it now stands, communities must go to the legislature to seek constitutional amendments for various routine municipal matters. For instance, because the boundaries of many of Alabama's cities are locked in by the constitution, city officials must seek legislative approval for annexation plans, then the voters from around the state must vote on it.

Why? Why should city fathers have to ask their state representatives to do the job they should be elected to do?

The answer is complex. Because legislators control what goes on back home, they are important and powerful people—state and community leaders. Many of the local legislators don't wish to relinquish that power. Moves to give Alabama home rule through a new constitution have been stymied in the House of Representatives.

For the entire state to vote on local matters, the state is required to fund a constitutional election. There have been at least 21 constitutional elections since 1960 at a cost of \$500,000 each.

Taxpayers have shelled out more than \$10,500,000 for constitutional elections in the last 18 years.

That's a lot of money.

The Need is Clear

With Wallace's support, one would think home rule could be easily passed. And since home rule is the stumbling block for a new constitution, why not go the final step? The need for a new constitution is clear. The present document was written in 1901, and as Attorney General Bill Baxley says, it was outdated in 1902. Alabama's constitution is 120,000 words long—the longest in the country—and it has been amended more than 380 times, with 250 of those amendments pertaining to only one county.

Some examples of local application show the absurdity of the present situation:

- 1). Birmingham officials had to go through the legislature and a statewide referendum before they could repaint the city's waste removal equipment brown—the newly-designated county color.

- 2) Mobile has a mosquito problem, but before a county-wide mosquito and rodent removal program could be instituted voters in Birmingham, Huntsville, Auburn, and even Opp had to approve it!

Too Detailed

The Alabama Constitution is too long, too detailed and too old. There has been immeasurable progress in this state since the turn of the century and the 1901 constitution hasn't kept up.

For example, automobiles have been refined and airplanes invented and refined, roads have been paved, blacks

can now vote and eat in any corner diner, women can vote and nearly every house has a television set. In short, Alabama's constitution has not changed with the times and because it is so detailed no one could ever expect it to.

The United States Constitution is much older than Alabama's, but the Founding Fathers did not mean for the document to be used as a guide for every particular situation. Congress is charged with the task of writing laws. The U.S. Constitution is short, only seven articles, and it has been amended a scant 26 times since its adoption in 1789. It is as a constitution should be, a skeleton, a framework on which to hang laws.

Alabama's Constitution is complicated. State Senator Bill King of Huntsville, who has worked for constitutional revision, said the state needs "a simple, basic document the people can understand."

"Some of the language in our current constitution would take two law firms to understand and then they probably wouldn't agree," King said.

The Support Is There

Wallace is not alone in saying he supports home rule. It seems every politician in Montgomery sees the need for home rule and for a new constitution. Gubernatorial candidates Attorney General Bill Baxley, Lt. Gov. Jere Beasley, State Senator Sid McDonald, Former Gov. Albert Brewer and Opelika Businessman Fob James have all said they favor a new constitution.

Baxley has called it the most pressing need facing the state. Brewer appointed a Constitutional Revision Commission when he was governor and the Commission came up with a

workable 14-article proposal. But the legislature chose only to adopt the Judicial Article and has not acted on the rest. If there is such strong support in Montgomery for a new constitution what, is the hold up?

It appears that perhaps the governor doesn't really want home rule and constitutional revision as much as he recently told the people he does. And the members of the House of Representatives just don't want to give up the power that goes along with constitutional control. In 1977 the Senate almost unanimously passed a bill calling for a constitutional convention which would draw up a completely new constitution. But the measure didn't even come up for a vote in the House.

Members of the House who oppose a new constitution are there—but are hard to find. Speaker of the House Joe McCorquodale won't come out and say he is against Constitutional revision—but Bill King, the strongest proponent

of Constitutional reform in the Senate, and Rep. Bob Hill, a convention supporter in the House, both agree that if the speaker supported a new constitution, the bill would at least make it through the Rules Committee.

Convention or Revision?

Some political observers, both liberal and conservative, see potential dangers in a constitutional convention if monied lobbyists could influence the proceedings their way. But those seeking revision have given up on the legislature and are taking the matter to the people. Lt. Gov. Jere Beasley is among the many politicians now favoring the convention method. Beasley said he trusts the people more than he trusts the Alabama Legislature.

But even if a convention takes place, proponents say the delegates will draw heavily from Brewer's Revision Commission report.

The total cost of a convention is estimated at \$600,000—little more than the cost of one constitutional amendment election. Senator King and Rep. Hill have reintroduced their convention bills and the Senate is expected to once again quickly approve the plan. Yet Hill has had trouble getting a favorable report out of the Speaker-controlled Rules Committee. Hill says that if the convention bill comes up for a vote he thinks it will pass.

But until the Legislature acts, lawmakers in Montgomery and voters in Huntsville and Selma and Opp will decide how the people of Auburn and Birmingham will govern themselves. Perhaps Bill Baxley summed up the situation best: "The question at issue here may very well be the turning point in the history of our State in developing her potential to improve the quality of life for all our citizens."

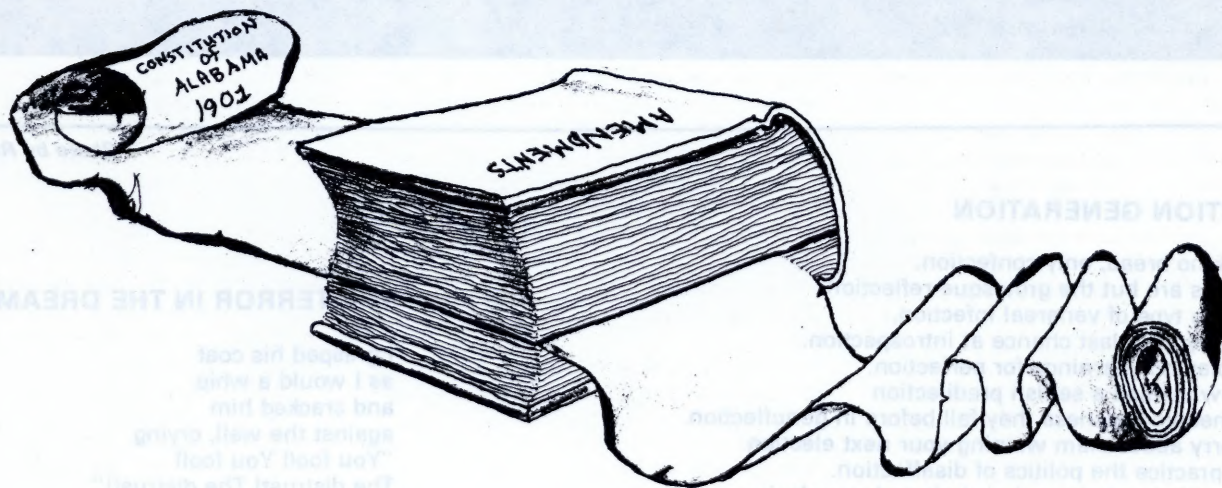


Illustration by Sue Howard

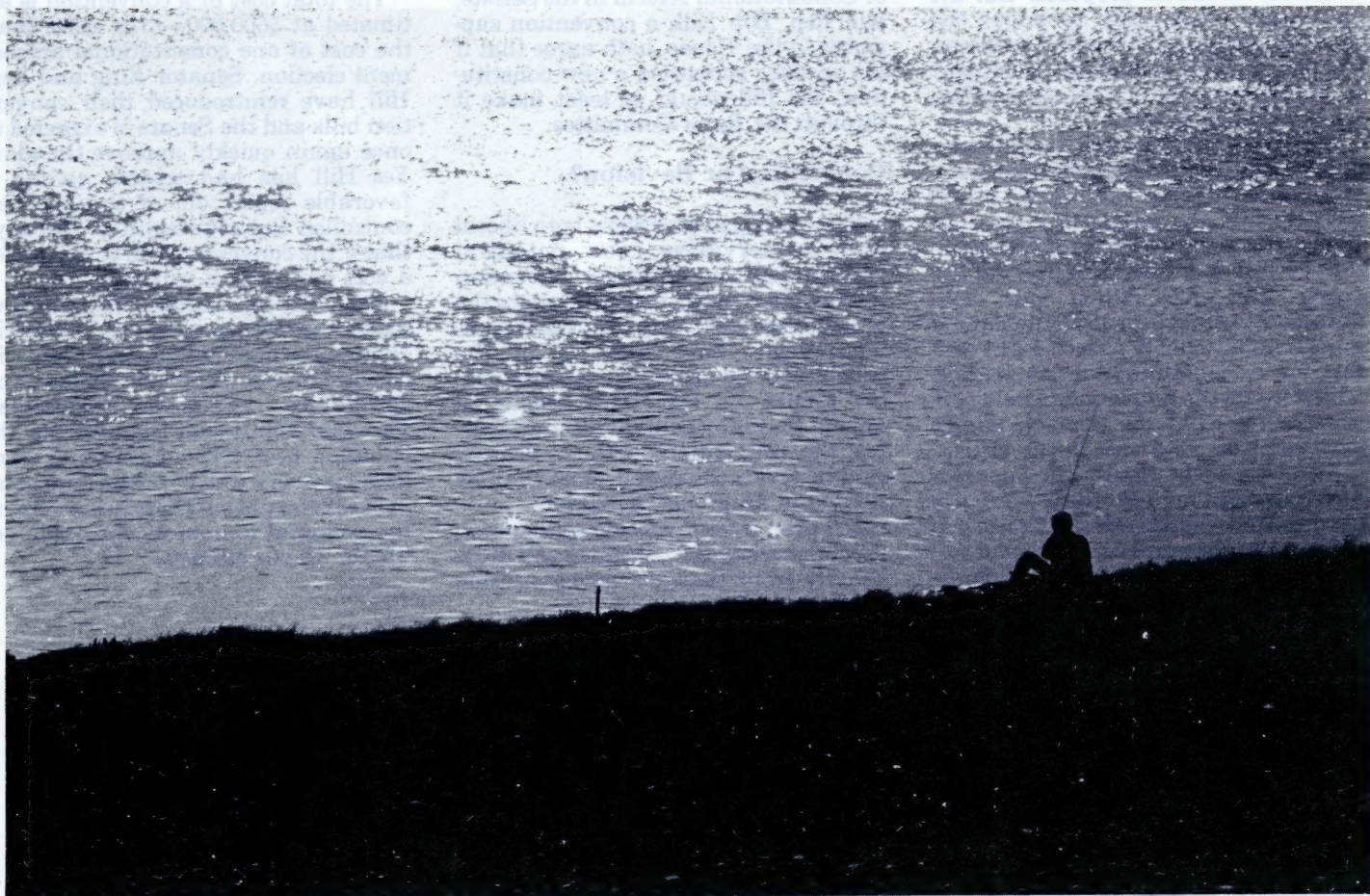


Photo by Robin Carter

THE ECTION GENERATION

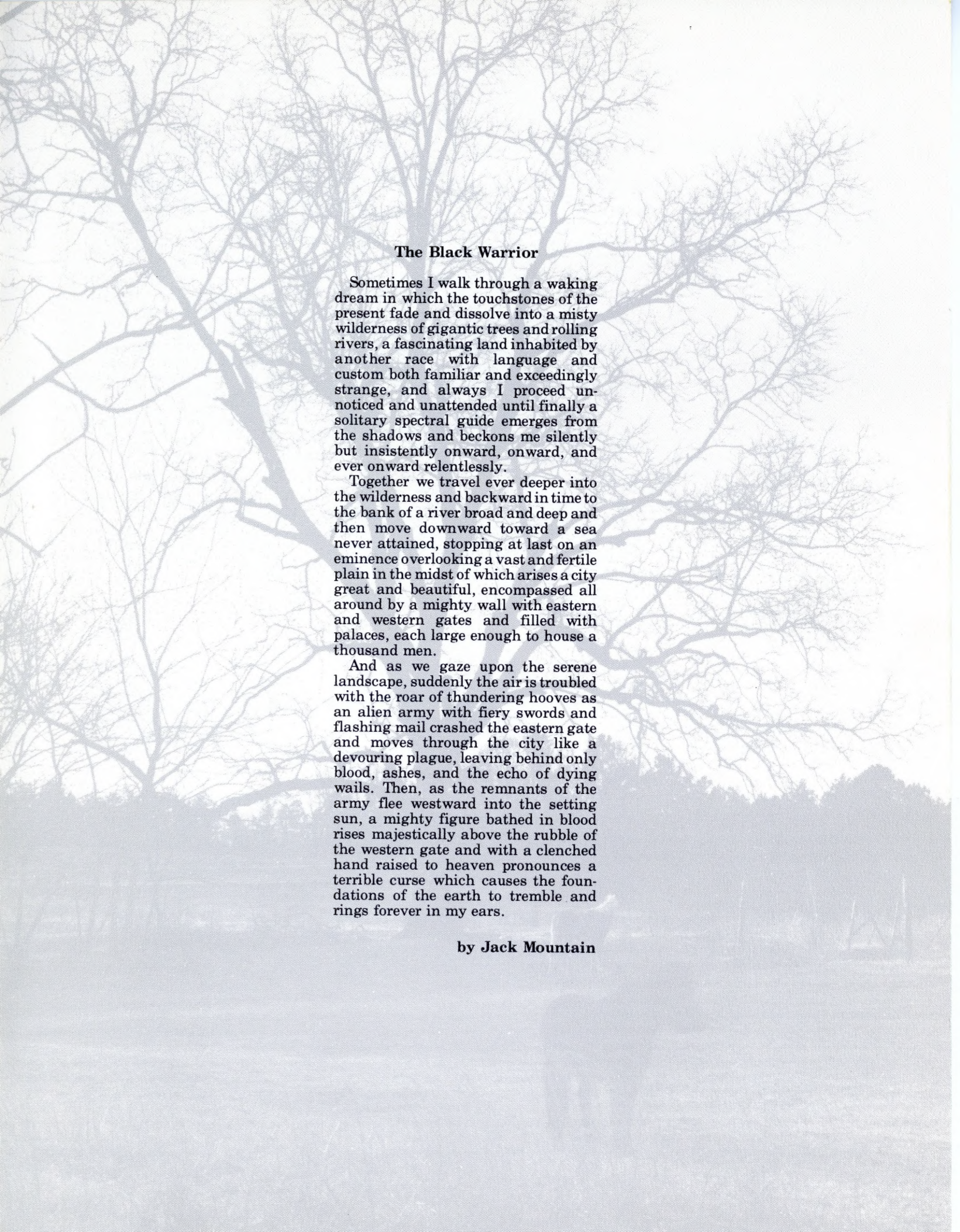
They seek no bread, only confection.
 Their brains are but the grotesque reflection
 Of a certain type of venereal infection,
 Eating away their last chance at introspection.
 They display no yearnings for perfection.
 They show instead a selfish predilection
 For the meaninglessness they fall before in genuflection.
 Don't worry about them winning your next election
 For they practice the politics of disaffection.
 They worry instead about their hair and complexion,
 Or where to make their next mind-changer connection.
 Some of them came 'cause of mama's rejection,
 Others want to blend in and avoid detection.
 But every member of this mass defection
 Will say he's only looking for some protection
 From a world that looks too closely in inspection,
 That's certainly headed in the wrong direction,
 That sees only shadows and speaks without inflection.
 But don't look to these refugees for resurrection,
 They, who chastise corruption, ignore correction.
 Time's dull scalpel continues the world's bloody dissection,
 As values are numbed by the anesthetic injection
 Of a serum that causes no one to raise objection,
 But only to ponder what truth they will next shun.

—M. Clinton Winne

THE TERROR IN THE DREAM

I grasped his coat
 as I would a whip
 and cracked him
 against the wall, crying
 "You fool! You fool!
 The distrust! The distrust!"
 And the tears welled up
 in the worn eyes of my father,
 and he yelled:
 "How could you? How could you?"
 And the tears poured down,
 the tears that damn,
 as I stretched
 the thin, strong threads
 of the coat of my father.

Fred Donovan Hill



The Black Warrior

Sometimes I walk through a waking dream in which the touchstones of the present fade and dissolve into a misty wilderness of gigantic trees and rolling rivers, a fascinating land inhabited by another race with language and custom both familiar and exceedingly strange, and always I proceed unnoticed and unattended until finally a solitary spectral guide emerges from the shadows and beckons me silently but insistently onward, onward, and ever onward relentlessly.

Together we travel ever deeper into the wilderness and backward in time to the bank of a river broad and deep and then move downward toward a sea never attained, stopping at last on an eminence overlooking a vast and fertile plain in the midst of which arises a city great and beautiful, encompassed all around by a mighty wall with eastern and western gates and filled with palaces, each large enough to house a thousand men.

And as we gaze upon the serene landscape, suddenly the air is troubled with the roar of thundering hooves as an alien army with fiery swords and flashing mail crashed the eastern gate and moves through the city like a devouring plague, leaving behind only blood, ashes, and the echo of dying wails. Then, as the remnants of the army flee westward into the setting sun, a mighty figure bathed in blood rises majestically above the rubble of the western gate and with a clenched hand raised to heaven pronounces a terrible curse which causes the foundations of the earth to tremble and rings forever in my ears.

by Jack Mountain

CONTRIBUTORS

Dr. Robert Andelson, a faculty member of the *Circle* editorial board, is a professor of philosophy and the author of a book, *Imputed Rights*. He serves on the editorial boards of *The Personalist*, an international journal of philosophy, and *The Journal of Economics and Sociology* and is listed in *Who's Who in America*.

Robin Carter, an Air Force veteran now majoring in philosophy, contributes to the *Circle* for the first time this quarter with his poignant story, "The Gravetender."

Dennas Davis, the *Circle's* new art director, is a sophomore majoring in visual art. Thus far, he has avoided indoctrination by editorial board members that classes and school work are but extra-curricular activities in the circus they call college.

Martha Duggar, former *Circle* editor, present English graduate student, proves she still has what it takes. Martha combines her wit with her agility for words to give us an unusual in-depth look at mules.

Ruth Ann Dunn, a skilled photographer and writer, has utilized her talents for *The Circle*, *Plainsman*, and *Glomerata*. A senior majoring in journalism, she joins her abilities with Jackie Romine to look at the Alabama Indians.

Rick Harmon is the managing editor and entertainment editor of the *Plainsman*. Harmon takes time to write poetry and prose when he is not making mad, lust-crazed love to Auburn's many luscious females. As you see, he has had a lot of time to write.

Madison Jones, Auburn Alumni Writer-In-Residence, and a member of *The Circle's* editorial board, will publish his sixth novel this spring. Called *Passage through Gehenna*, it is the first novel ever published by the LSU Press. He has sold the movie rights to two books: *An Exile* (made into the film *I Walk the Line*), and *A Cry of Absence* which made the front page of the *New York Times Book Review*.

Wanda Kenton, a member of the editorial board, transfers some of her abundant energies to her photo essay in this issue, even after suffering the trauma of being locked in a graveyard. She gives life to a dead subject.

James Locke, the philosophical student on the *Circle's* editorial board, is known to outsiders as the dynamic vice-president of the Council of International Relations and United Nations Affairs, but in his private life is the front and center high-stepper at an undisclosed number of entertainment spots in the Birmingham and Columbus area.

Mickey Logue brings a journalist's voice to the editorial board of *The Circle*. Before coming to Auburn as a journalism professor, he was on the staffs of the *Atlanta Constitution*, *Montgomery Advertiser*, and *Birmingham News*. In 1975 he served as visiting assistant editor of the prestigious *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

Mala Paulk, called "daring" by her grandmother for her sojourns into areas of ill repute (purely to observe), is a member of the *Circle* editorial board and is an English education major. She wrote the rest of these synopses.

David Petrizzi, a senior in speech communication, demonstrates skill in both poetry and prose in this issue.

Jerry Roden, Jr., an emeritus faculty member of the *Circle* editorial board, was editor of *The Auburn Alumnews* from 1957 to 1965. He is now busy planning the publication of a new magazine.

Jackie Romine, features editor of the *Plainsman*, will begin work for the *Auburn Bulletin* after her graduation this quarter. She combines her talents with Ruth Ann Dunn in a feature on the Alabama Indians.

Sharon Stacey, a senior majoring in accounting, is a member of the editorial board and is skillful in the use of numbers as well as in words.

Lauren Steele, who is often attacked with the statement: "Are you still here?" is graduating this quarter. Described as the reformed campus radical toned down in recent years, Lauren is working this quarter with the Alabama Public Television, covering the Alabama legislative sessions. He uses this political knowledge in an article on the revision of the Alabama constitution.

Ken Taylor, the apt and amiable assistant editor of the *Circle* is a junior in journalism, switching to English. He combines his knowledge of the music industry with his writing skills to give a unique overview of the Charlie Daniels' band.

Dee Voyles, a graduate student in math education, brings considerable experience in writing and publication to her position on the *Circle* editorial board. She is still expecting her first child which we hope will be congruent to our schedule for the spring issue.

Charlotte Ward, an associate professor of physics, is a faculty member of the *Circle* editorial board. Believing that "every community needs its own colorful character to make things more interesting," she bikes to class, even in freezing weather, and refuses to buy a car. She contributes to various scientific journals and has written a physical science textbook for college students, *This Blue Planet*.

Mark Winne, the illustrious editor of the *Circle*, is a junior majoring in journalism. Balancing academic endeavors with parades to strip joints (on assignment), tinkering with dead batteries, and issuing unsubtle and oftentimes obscene orders around the *Circle* office, the "wild and crazy guy" vows that without these things he could be a Rhodes scholar. Is this witty, like you wanted, Mark?
